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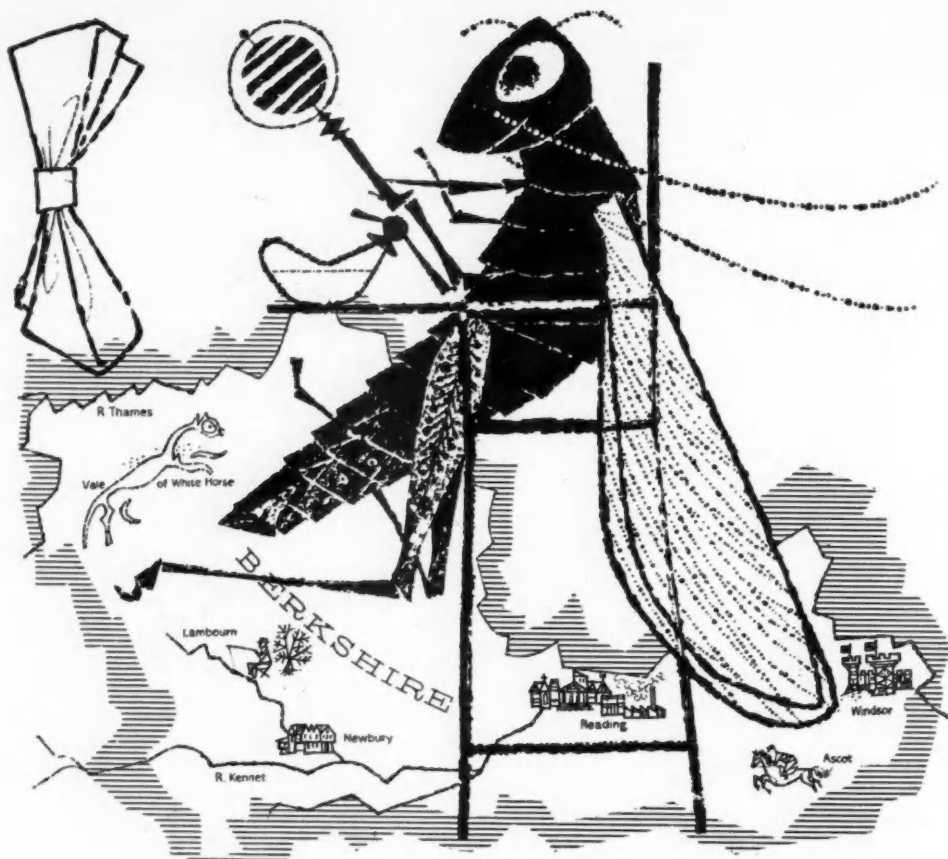
AUG 22 1955

PERIODICALS

Design

The Council of Industrial Design August 1955 No 80 Price 2s 6d





He's big and brown, but British born and bred. His ancestors were locusts of the
 African deserts, whose descents upon the fertile valleys of many Middle Eastern countries
 used to bring starvation and ruin to luckless peasant farmers.

Born in Today, he and his kin are reared
Berkshire by an I.C.I. research station in Berkshire,
 so that he may be studied by scientists whose only aim is
 to discover quicker, more effective means of exterminating his wild relations.

The workers of this selfsame I.C.I. research station helped to develop
 the range of 'Gammexane' insecticides which have done so much to give control
 not only of locusts but of insect pests ranging from bedbugs to flea-beetles and mosquitoes.

*Thus, and in a thousand kindred ways, I.C.I.'s research
 and production are serving the Nation.*



NUMBER 80
AUGUST 1955

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Design

Industry and patronage

RECENT DISCUSSIONS ON PLATFORMS and in the Press have made much of industry's responsibilities to the artist. The mantle worn for so long and with such distinction by the private patron has, by direction of the Inland Revenue Commissioners, descended on the broad shoulders of the business man. He alone in present circumstances can accept the role and foot the bill. If he refuses to play, there are no second strings. As Mr F. C. Hooper has shown,* state subsidy in all its forms is already stretched to the logical limits and its financial contribution to the arts in relation to other commitments is not likely to increase.

It is as a corporate body and not as an individual that the industrialist inherits the responsibility of the patron. To perform his full function he must provide not only work for a thriving number of artists – this he already does with varying success – but also conditions in which great works of art can be created. His predecessor was perhaps more fortunate in that he could often do both at the same time.

But patronage is only successful if exercised with knowledge and understanding on both sides. The tyro is apt to back the wrong horse or buy a pup, and shareholders who feel that business operations should bring in a return are not sympathetic to bungling which damages rather than enhances their prestige. The type of patronage which is both successful and in the long run profitable to all concerned, is a skill gradually acquired. Both knowledge and mutual understanding are achieved through the wise use of talented architects, artists and designers for a firm's premises, publicity, and particularly the product itself. A grace and comeliness in everyday things is an achievement which is proving to be a sound investment.

We do not lack examples of distinguished products which are a source of pride and wealth not only to the management and workers of the firm but also to the nation. The best of our posters – and these are not inflated easel paintings – can hold their own in any company and the rising standard of architecture for some retail stores is proving that it is as well not to underrate the public's taste. These activities have served the community at large and it in turn has not been slow to confirm its goodwill towards the firms concerned; but they are all too few.

The close association of art and industry in this remunerative way prepares both for a further partnership in which a more liberal patronage can produce great works of art. Once industrialists have proved to themselves the wisdom of a design policy within their own firms experienced and successful patrons should not be difficult to find.

* 'Business as Patron of the Arts in the Industrial Age'; see DESIGN May 1955 page 8.



HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

was elected into an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Art at the Convocation Ceremony in July. Below we publish his speech in full.

NOT VERY LONG AGO I had the good fortune to pay a short visit to the Royal College of Art and to see something of the work going on. I want to say right away how much I was struck by the vitality and the enthusiasm which was so obvious in every department I visited. This, of course, is exactly as it should be, because, after all, if any artistic endeavour becomes dull, repetitive, boring or uninspired it loses its claim to have anything to do with art.

It is particularly important that this College should always keep a fresh outlook and an adventurous spirit, otherwise I don't see how it can hope to exert any influence for the good upon modern domestic design.

Industrial design, or art in industry, is, I believe, really a misnomer. It is true, the artist or designer may work in an industry, but the stuff he designs ends up in the home, in the streets, in the office or in the workshop. I am sure that people like seeing and living with nice things. I don't believe that the critical or appreciative faculty is automatically switched off when leaving an art gallery. After all, most people take their eyes with them to work just as they take their eyes to the National Gallery or the bathroom. They may not always look, but there is a growing tendency to look much more critically.

The Design Centre

There is no excuse for unattractive design in anything that is likely to be seen by human eyes, even less if it has a function to perform as well. With all due respect to that august body, it will be a great day in my opinion when it is considered as important to have something shown in the Design Centre as it is to have a picture hung in the Royal

Academy. This day is bound to be some way off as the Design Centre is only to be opened next spring!

To put it kindly, you're lucky if you own a picture painted by an RA but most people have got to live with furniture, domestic objects, cars, shops, pubs and everything else which surrounds our daily lives. It is inevitable that we should see more advertisements than old masters.

Artist engineers

Some people bewail the passing of the artist craftsman, others have no time for anything unless it is made by hand. Of course the artist craftsman is still there but he cannot possibly meet the needs of any but a very small section of the public. It may be very sad that things are not made by hand, but the fact remains that to make anything in sufficient quantity it must be made by machine, and there is no reason why the machine should not make nice things if it is given half a chance. What we lack are not artist craftsmen but artist engineers. There is no reason whatsoever in this day and age why we should be palmed off with second-rate stuff on the excuse that it is machine-made.

Artists cannot divorce themselves from the materials they work with and the tools of their art. Even a painter must know some technical details about his paints, brushes and canvas. Likewise, I imagine a sculptor has to know the difference between wood and stone. Therefore, it does not seem very much to ask that an artist, if he wants to be employed in industry, should know something about the capabilities and the limitations of modern machinery.

Conversely, it can also be said that those engineering draughtsmen who are in fact product-designers should have some specific training in the aesthetic side of their job. After all, there is no mystery about it and they are certainly just as susceptible as most other people

to artistic influence if they are given the chance and the encouragement.

It is frequently suggested that to produce a well designed article you need the active co-operation and united efforts of artist and technologist. That may be true, but isn't it rather like painting a picture second-hand? I would like to suggest that the best designer is in fact the artist engineer. Only the artist engineer can readily understand the enormous possibilities which are constantly opening up with new materials and new techniques. The combination of qualities necessary to be an artist engineer gives him the best chance of tackling those opportunities with experiment and invention, with practical originality and with taste.

Artists in any medium have something in common - they belong to the same world, but their knowledge of their own art alone will not let them into any other world. So that quite apart from any practical considerations, if artists wish to be wholeheartedly accepted into the industrial world they must have technological qualifications. After all, that is only human nature.

To sum up then. First, I believe that there is plenty of room for good design in all the things which surround us in our daily lives. Secondly, the machine is with us and I think it is probably here to stay, therefore we need artist-engineers who can so control our machines that they will produce only attractive things.

I fully appreciate that I am preaching to the converted. No one can visit the College without realising how much importance is placed on technology. But I believe that it is not a bad idea to give even the converted a bit of encouragement now and then.

This College can have a profound effect upon the lives of millions of people, and I want each one of you to leave here convinced that you personally can do something to make the everyday things of this life and this country nicer to look at, nicer to feel, and nicer to use.



REPORT FROM HÄLSINGBORG

IN THE JUNE ISSUE of DESIGN we published a preview of the British flat which is being shown in the international pavilion at H55, on show until August 28. Since it opened on June 10 we have had an opportunity to visit the exhibition and to see at first hand not only how our own flat compares with those from seven other countries, but also the wealth of ideas displayed in the Swedish pavilions. The following report is divided into two sections: Sir Gordon Russell, Director CoID, discusses current Swedish design standards and the progress that has been made since the Stockholm exhibition of 1930, which he also visited; and John Blake reviews the international exhibit.

The mole on which the main sections of the exhibition are built.

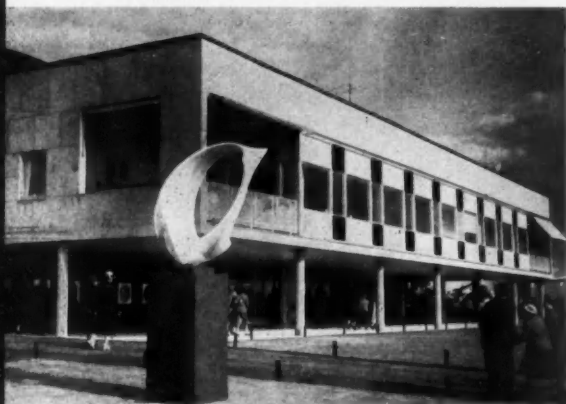


SWEDISH EXHIBITIONS 1930 1955

Sir Gordon Russell

The 1930 Exhibition in Stockholm was something new in the history of exhibitions. For the first time good design was presented to the public in the shape of goods which everybody could afford. This presentation naturally implied a proper understanding of the value of the machine, which made such productivity possible, and the exhibition gave great encouragement to supporters of the Modern Movement throughout the world. It was organised by a well known architect, the late Gunnar Asplund, and he managed to impose upon his exhibition a unity lacking in earlier international displays. To achieve this effect he made unstinted use of timber, paint and flags, and by erecting temporary

▼ The 'Parapetan' restaurant – the only permanent building in the exhibition. Architect, Bengt Gate. The sculpture is by B. Amundin.



▼ The 'Siporex' house – one of a series of furnished prefabricated houses showing many advanced ideas on this type of construction which have been developed by Swedish architects.



buildings he allowed himself fuller scope than his predecessors had enjoyed in, for example, the concrete buildings of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924.

The exhibition at Hälsingborg shows how good design has become established in Sweden during the past 25 years. Articles of real beauty, it seems, can be found in ordinary shops with little trouble. At the exhibition it is difficult to find an ugly product, while the Swedish craft based industries such as glassware and earthenware reveal some beautiful workmanship. Hälsingborg is a seaside town and its attractive site has been well used, though there is a less robust use of colour than in 1930. Perhaps it would be true to say that there is somewhat less sparkle and gaiety than one seems to remember in the earlier exhibition.

Building costs in Sweden are high, and this gives a great incentive to prefabrication, for which timber is an abundant and versatile raw material. Weather conditions in Sweden are more uncertain than here, and prefabrication allows the factory work to go ahead at all times, while assembly can be rapid whenever a favourable opportunity occurs. Careful study has been made in Sweden of the problems of insulation so as to meet the rigours of a climate where central heating is needed even in June. The fruits of this study are shown at the exhibition and are available to British manufacturers who care to investigate.

But the most important feature of Hälsingborg is its reiteration of the theme first announced at Stockholm in 1930 – that well designed articles for daily use should be available to everyone. The Swedes have gone much further than we have to put this theory into practice: it is so obviously sound that it must eventually be accepted everywhere.

EIGHT WAYS OF LIVING

John E. Blake

Model flats from Great Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, Japan, Denmark, Switzerland and Finland

Of all the exhibits at Hälsingborg the international pavilion, showing model flats from eight countries, seemed to create most interest among visitors during the opening days. Seldom does the opportunity occur to see in so compact an area the highest existing standards of home planning and furnishing from so many different countries. Here at last, it was perhaps over-optimistically imagined, we would be able to test our conceptions of foreign design in conditions of direct comparison. Here would be answered so many of the questions we had so long been asking: "Is there really

an international style in home furnishings today?" "Is the kitchen-dining room an established element in modern home planning?" "Are other nations besides ourselves using more ornament in their homes?" "Have foreign designers discovered new secrets for saving space; new ways of dealing with the children?" . . . and so on.

Unfortunately, many of these questions must remain unanswered, for the interpretations of the brief for the exhibit vary to such an extent that true comparisons are in most cases impossible. Thus a new

GREAT BRITAIN

ORGANISER *Council of Industrial Design*

ARCHITECT *Eric Lyons (flat chosen by Michael Pattrick)*

INTERIOR DESIGNER *Jo Pattrick*

The flat is notable for the thoroughness with which the designer has attempted to give a 'lived in' quality, though some complained of overcrowding and a lack of restraint in the use of pattern. Colour schemes are quiet and unobtrusive.

AN ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE of the British flat containing a complete list of the suppliers of furniture, furnishings and equipment, and printed in English and Swedish, is available from the official bookstall at H 55, price 1kr, or from the Council of Industrial Design, price 1s 6d.



▲ Living room.



▲ Study which leads from the living room. A wall storage unit with built in writing top would have made the desk unnecessary and saved space.

▼ Kitchen - the only one designed for eating as well as cooking.



question arises which dominates all others, concerned less with the flats themselves than with the way in which they are displayed. The question is: "What concessions to exhibition technique must be made if a show flat is to create the most desirable impression?"

The conditions laid down by the exhibition authorities were for a family flat of about 1,000 square feet that would demonstrate current practice in each country. The flats were to be chosen from dwellings existing or under construction but could also represent a solution of a more experimental character. Furniture and furnishings were to be chosen from products available on the open market, the flats to be fully equipped with kitchens, bathrooms and other essential fittings.

The British interpretation is by far the most realistic. The aim of the designers was to reproduce a modern, authentic British home which would also be a shop window for the best domestic products available in this country. No detail was spared that would contribute to the illusion of reality. There were complaints, however, that the exhibit seems overcrowded. "Why", sighed the Germans and the Swiss, "is there so much furniture, so many accessories?" "They are all necessary", one explained. "But the harmony, the scale . . .", they persisted. This seemed to sum up in varying degrees the approach of most of the other countries - scale, harmony, the exact relationship of a pot to a shelf, the careful juxtaposition of plain surface to pattern, the delicate arrangement of objects on a table, the precise grouping of furniture in austere classical patterns - all contrived to give, not the impression of a real home, but an abstract equivalent of it. These are examples of exhibition technique, exercises in formal composition for the benefit of spectators.

Would we have been better advised to have followed a similar course? The answer is emphatically no. By deciding on their realistic approach the British designers have achieved a quality distinct from the other flats and memorable because of it. Swedish visitors spoke highly of its cosy intimacy which they thought compared favourably with the cold formality of their own flat.

But whether we could have avoided the crowded look and still have achieved the authenticity is a question for more subtle consideration. The visual arts depend for their impact upon a process of selection and emphasis. Even the documentary film relies on cutting and the adjustment of climax to re-create reality. Are there not things we can learn from this? Could not the realism be concentrated at focal points to be relieved by areas of a quieter nature? After all, our coffee tables are not laid for coffee, our dining tables for dinner, our study table for cocktails and our kitchen table for breakfast - not all at the same time.

In some other flats the visitor is put to great trouble trying to imagine how they would in reality appear. Aalto for the Finnish exhibit used only skeleton structures to suggest some of the walls, giving the impression of a much more open plan than would actually exist. The same applies to the Japanese house, though this has other fascinating qualities. The Germans used a translucent muslin ceiling giving a strong even light over all the rooms. This lends a brilliance to the colours which would have been softened had the light been allowed to come from the windows at the side. The Swiss, hard pressed for time and money, did not attempt a flat at all but had to make do with a furnished room and a small exhibition of domestic articles. The Danes symbolised their staircase by suspending coloured stair risers by wire from the ceiling,

FRANCE

ORGANISER *Comité Français des Expositions*

ARCHITECT *Marcel Roux*

INTERIOR DESIGNER *Marcel Gascoin*

This flat has many points to recommend it. A project for the South of France it has a more open plan than the others, and a feeling of space which is emphasised by the large sliding glass doors leading to the balcony, and the partially open screen of cupboards dividing dining room from kitchen. Features of interest are the workroom (badly needed in flats), a small study recess (to give necessary privacy in such an open arrangement) and a useful sliding door storage unit in the nursery.



▲ The general living room. The open hatchway and two-sided storage cupboards dividing kitchen and dining areas are on the right.

▼ Laundry activities are sensibly planned for the bathroom in which this shower replaces the normal bath. Hand painted tiles are garish and characteristically French.



▼ Storage cupboard in the nursery. The whole front slides to the left closing these open shelves and opening those next to them.



giving an interesting effect but a false sense of space. Bathrooms were ignored by the Finns, the Swiss and the Japanese; kitchens by the Finns and Swiss. The Japanese house, which is divided into traditional and modern sections, includes a charcoal oven in the traditional half but overlooks the cooking problem for the moderns.

Where direct comparisons can be made the real differences and similarities of approach among the various countries become much more apparent. All the flats apart from the British, which has neutral colours in the living room, and the Japanese, which favours natural surfaces, show a marked preference for startlingly bright schemes of decoration. White walls predominate, though these are contrasted with areas painted in clear primary colours. Only the British and Germans have made appreciable use of wallpaper, though the Swedes have a modest design which recalls some early Bauhaus papers. In this respect it is interesting to note that both the Germans and the British have used a bold black and white paper in the hall. The German use of string and wire netting to decorate the walls seems, however, to have few practical applications. There is little sign among the foreign flats of a return to the use of natural motifs in decoration.

The conception of the kitchen and its relationship to the dining room offers perhaps the most interesting comparisons. The British kitchen, though small, shows its link with an older tradition. It is at once more versatile and at the same time more self-contained than the others, for meals can be taken there or the food can be carried through the door to the dining table. The other kitchens are, on the other hand, single purpose rooms. Their specialised nature is expressed in their arrangements of sink, cooker, cupboards, etc, on each side of a narrow working space, with access through a hatch to the dining area. This conception was carried furthest by the French who have a double-sided cupboard extending the full length of the kitchen and a working top common to the two rooms which can be used as a serving table in the dining room. The cupboard was designed to contain all the crockery normally stored in the conventional sideboard, and can be reached either from the kitchen or the dining side.

Other points must be briefly mentioned. Storage units with bookshelves and cupboards seem to be a common feature in modern room planning and are used in the Swiss, British, Danish, German and Swedish flats. The Swiss one with adjustable shelves is the most ingenious; the Swedish, a built-in fixture, the largest and probably the most expensive. Most incorporate a folding or extendable writing top – a feature lacking in the British example. Were a suitable British design of this type available, the desk could have been excluded which would have gone a long way to meet the critics of overcrowding. A workshop or hobbies room is a notable feature of the French flat – an innovation which would gladden the heart of many a frustrated handyman who is also a flat-dweller. The Japanese house, perhaps the most charming as a piece of display, shows the influence of the West, but also gives point to a growing feeling that there is much we can learn from the East.

The greatest disappointment in the international exhibit is the absence of flats from the U S A and Italy. Both these countries were to have participated and their contributions might well have provided ideas and contrasts that would have added an extra spark of vitality to the exhibit as a whole.

GERMANY

ORGANISER *Rat für Formgebung*

ARCHITECT *Hans Schwaippert*

INTERIOR DESIGNER *Günter Hennig and Brigitte D'Ortschy*

Compact, orderly and practical, the German flat makes the most of the space available and seems much larger than it actually is, with three bedrooms instead of the usual two. An outstanding piece of furniture is the cupboard in the parents' bedroom. Designed as a series of six units on a modular basis to fit into most new German dwellings, this cupboard occupies the whole of one wall, and contains all the hanging and drawer space that one would require. Finish is excellent and the units are available on the German market. Generally, however, the simple stark furniture lacks character.



The living-room. Chromium plated tube is perhaps too clinical for British tastes but the wall storage unit which includes a writing desk is a useful space saver.

Mosaic tiled bathroom is sensible and decorative.



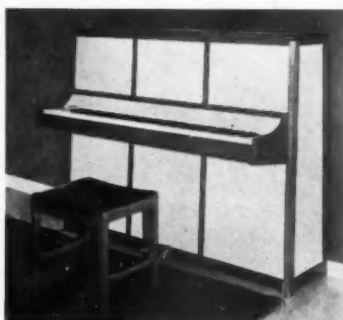
SWEDEN

ORGANISER *Svenska Slöjdföreningen*

ARCHITECT *Sten Lindegren*

INTERIOR DESIGNER *Sven Engström*

A quiet unobtrusive formality was the main note struck by the designers of the Swedish flat. Light woods, light walls, mostly plain surfaces, and the rigid placing of furniture in geometric patterns would dictate a correctness of behaviour at home that many would find difficult to maintain.



The thin framework of this piano and the white panels give an impression of lightness which belies the true weight of the instrument. The effect might have been better had the two vertical battens in the centre, which break up the horizontal lines and suggest a flimsy structure, been omitted.

The sitting area of the general living room. The wall storage unit is built in. Compare the chairs with those in the Japanese house (page 14).



JAPAN

ORGANISER *Japanese National Industrial Arts Institute*

ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER *Yoji Kasajima*

The simple timber frame construction and light walls show the strong link between this traditional Japanese building method and modern architectural thought. The exhibit is not, however, a reproduction of a real house but a display showing traditional and modern living rooms with an additional display of Japanese craft – examples of exquisite work in pottery, wood and basketry. Though the influence of the West is clear in the modern section, the characteristically quiet and restful proportions have in turn affected American design and may have a more far reaching influence. Predominantly natural textures are contrasted with black and earth red.



The traditional section. Beneath the table is a pit containing the charcoal oven. People sit on cushions on the floor and, we were told, dangle their legs in the pit while eating.

Modern section. A somewhat crude interpretation of Western ideas leaves the impression that the Japanese are still not completely reconciled to this way of living.



DENMARK

ORGANISER *Landsforeningen Dansk Kunsthåndværk*

ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER *Finn Juhl*

One goes away from the Danish flat with a feeling of frustration – rather like discovering half way through an absorbing book that the last half dozen chapters are missing. Everything is in perfect taste, colours are gay and simple, but it remains only the briefest sketch, a backcloth for the display of some fine pieces of furniture and some choice but sparsely arranged accessories.



The sitting end of the long living-dining room. The shelves above the seating area are adjustable and are supported by fixing devices housed in the slots between the panels.



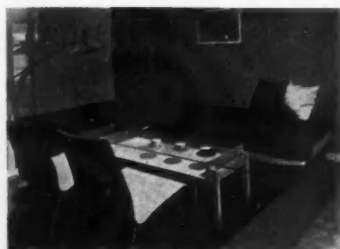
The dining end of the living room with a hatch through to the kitchen. The sparse furnishings are emphasised by the complete absence of pattern.

SWITZERLAND

ORGANISER *Schweizerischer Werkbund*

DESIGNER *Alfred Altherr*

Shortage of time and money prevented the Swiss from exhibiting a complete flat. The one furnished room divided by a free standing shelf unit into dining and sitting areas showed a taste for an austere formality reminiscent of the early teachings of the Bauhaus.



Sitting area. Severely functional and arranged more as a display than for practical living.

The most ingenious storage unit shown. Shelves are clipped to grooved the structural supports and can be adjusted to any height. The unit incorporates the slatted writing desk.



FINLAND

ORGANISER *Artek*

ARCHITECT *Alvar Aalto*

INTERIOR DESIGNER *Maij Heikinheimo*

The contribution from Finland is in many ways the most disappointing. Arranged purely as a display, the skeleton walls and suggested doorways give little idea of what the real flats, to be built it seems in Germany, would really look like. The emphasis is on a stark, severe simplicity, while some over-heavy, over-large balcony furniture suggests a new race of giants as future inhabitants.

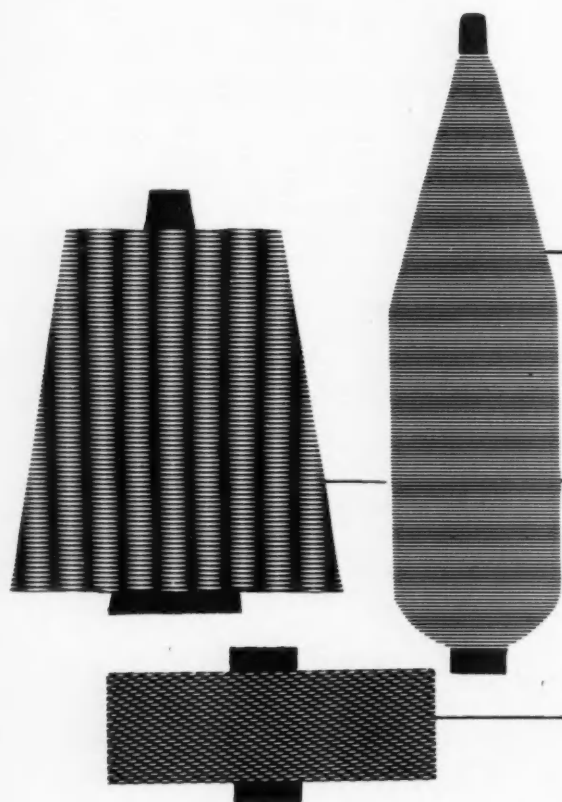


White walls, blond wood, severely functional furniture are the main characteristics of the Finnish flat. The folding screen in the background provides the only pattern.



This laminated furniture by Aalto has changed little from his original experiments before the war.

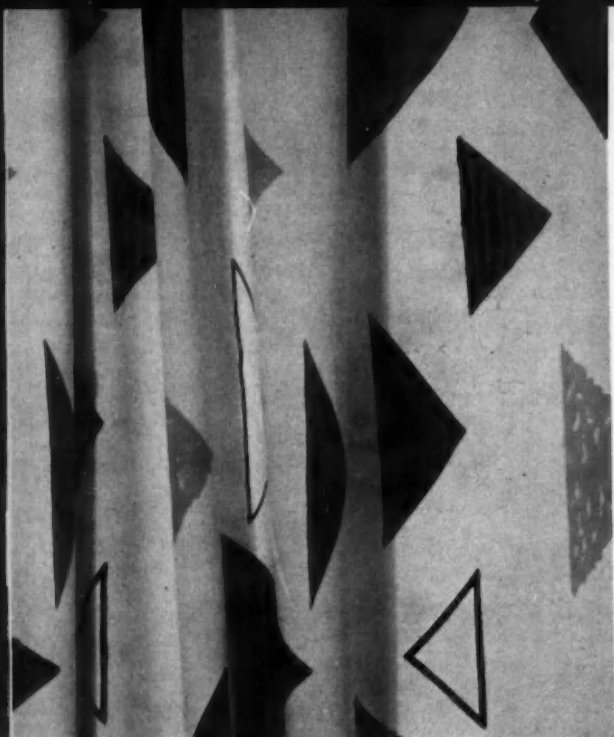
1 Two of Liberty's new furnishing fabrics are 'Tampico', left, designed by Martin Bradley and 'Fundy Bay' by Hilda Durkin. 'Tampico' is printed on a rough textured fabric and 'Fundy Bay' on a plain cloth. In both cases the choice of fabric is admirably suited to the design printed on it.



A survey of **TEXTILES**

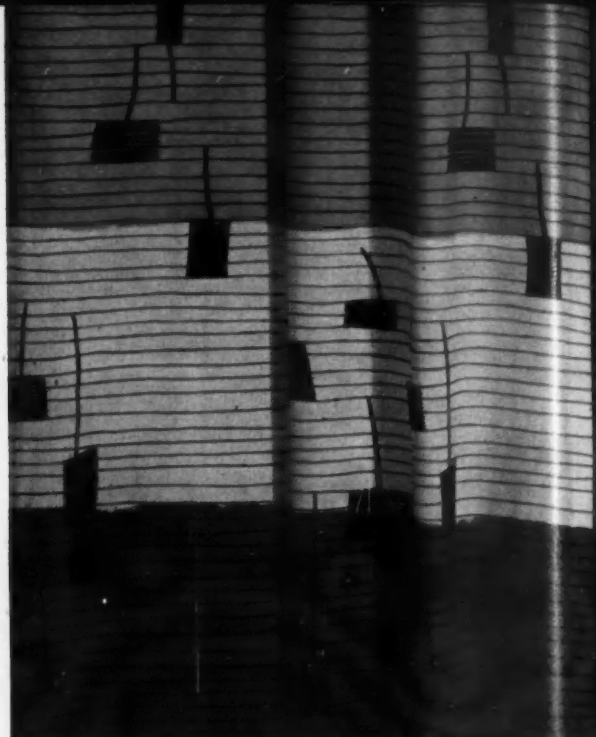
COMPETITION FOR WORLD MARKETS in textiles is increasing. Other nations are responding to this challenge by experimenting with fresh designs – a tendency conspicuous in the U S A where the best products from all countries are available, and where competition in design is therefore fiercest. In this survey of British textiles we select from the various trends those that seem most rewarding for the future. The British tradition in the design of furnishing fabrics is famous throughout the world and still produces valuable export business. Clearly several of the designs illustrated owe much to this typically British feeling. But many others indicate the possibility of establishing modern design on the same level of excellence and success as that achieved in the past.





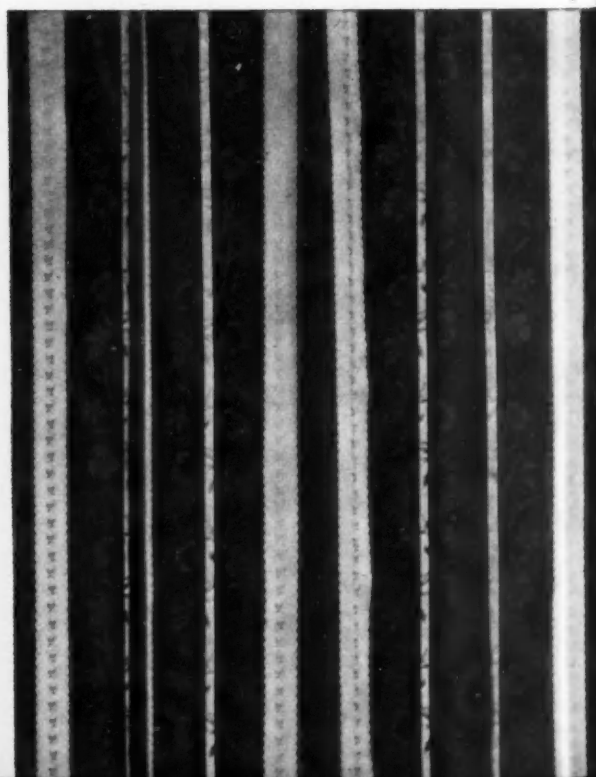
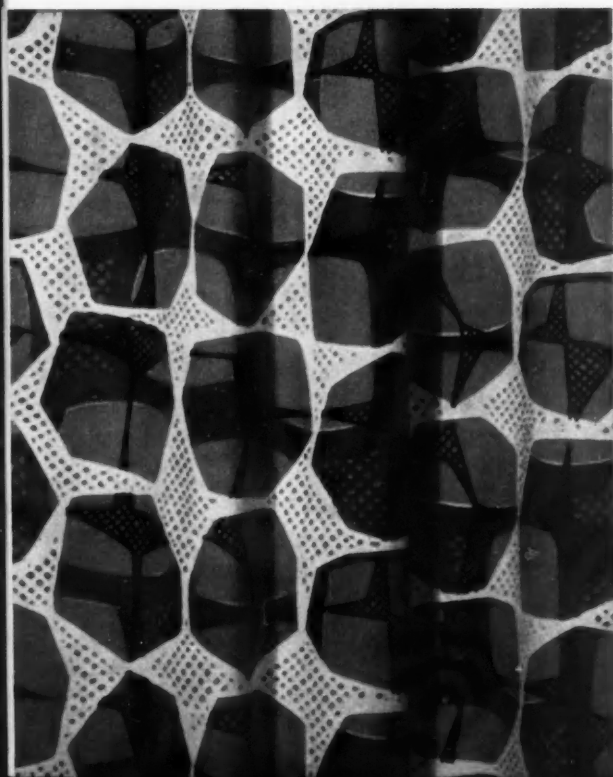
2 From Heal's comes 'Isosceles', a vigorous new design by Lucienne Day. Like ships dressed for a regatta, this light-hearted textile signals festivity with pennants of bright clear colour.

4 Tootals are marketing this cotton furnishing print inspired by the Forth Bridge. Due to the reduction in scale the fabric is more impressive than it appears when illustrated.



3 Also by Lucienne Day from Heal's is 'Triad', a design reminiscent of an old music MS. The staves are printed in soft greys and ambers. Both these designs are on plain cotton.

5 An acetate damask of traditional feeling, but giving an effect of richness and colour at a relatively modest price. Made by British Celanese Ltd.



FURNISHING TEXTILES IN GREAT BRITAIN are clearly at an interesting cross-roads. A cross-roads in this sense is generally taken to mean that development can proceed in either of two directions: but the present state of affairs shows a much closer analogy to a true cross-roads, at which four directions are possible – straight ahead, right, left, or backwards along the familiar road already travelled.

The difficulty – and this is said with full sympathy for both parties, producer and consumer – is that public taste is changing quicker than the manufacturer's ability or resources to keep pace with it. At what point will it settle down? What is the producer to aim at, his own guess at an eventual stability in one direction or another; a planned progression from traditional to modern, hoping to hit off each stage more or less correctly; or an opportunist approach hoping to strike oil with purely ephemeral, if not wholly cynical, productions? The first, unless he has a number of bread-and-butter lines which are independent of fashion, a railway contract, let us say, or cotton sheets, risks losing one fortune while playing for two: the second implies a knowledge of design and public appetite which comparatively few textile manufacturers seem to possess: the third is therefore commonest, least intelligent (since every sally is a shot in the dark), least rewarding, but least immediately risky. In the long run the third will destroy a firm's integrity and reputation; but in the short, like selective weed-killer, it may produce a temporary revival. The fourth arm of our cross-roads belongs to those firms whose home base, for historical reasons perhaps, is so placed that it is safer to go back to tea and warm slippers than to follow the bewildering paperchase down one turning or another. These can, or at any rate do, bet that they can safely rest on their traditional laurels during the lifetime of those directing them.

Designs and low price

It is of course at the cheaper end of the trade that the dilemma is most apparent and most real. To sell a furnishing print at a low price necessitates selling it, as with many other types of goods, in enormous quantities, because the initial outlay involved in roller engraving is very great and the profit to the converter per yard very small. But the sure-fire lines, the studio florals, the adaptations of adaptations, are no longer sure, because the public taste is growing up, becoming educated, self-reliant, knowledgeable. It never very strongly wanted what was sold to it, and now it positively rejects this kind of spoon-feeding. The result of the last war has been to send at least one member of nearly every family abroad, and to pour

new wine into old bottles with the usual explosive results. Simultaneously the 'Welfare State', under which the first generation is now growing up and setting up its own homes, has been pouring new wine into new bottles, and the Council of Industrial Design has been adding yeast to the general ferment with public exhibitions and propaganda up and down the country. And finally Lancashire is losing its markets both in price and quality: on price because Asian countries can produce and export similar cloths with a fraction of our labour costs and these can be converted a great deal nearer home: on quality because, although the quality of British textiles at their best is still superlative, the world is moving into an era where this virtue, as it has for a long time been in the American way of life, is less important than the possibilities of change. To have pretty things so cheaply that they do not outlast their freshness; to afford to change, not to be tied to a momentary choice or, as with clothes, a merely passing fashion, is the end of the long cycle of production which saw the handloom mechanised, the palace velvets dip to cottage velveteens, and finally the man-made fibres weaving silken hose for every Cinderella in the land.

Modern clichés

If, therefore, the screen-printer producing relatively more expensive furnishings can afford to test the upper end of the market with trial designs in smaller quantities, the quantity producer cannot. He should, one feels, take the right-hand turning of this cross-roads, the second alternative; but at the next best he takes the left, if he does not absolutely stand still in irresolute perplexity. For nothing is now more certain than that the modern idiom has won the day, and even has disciples who can relish the skilful mixture of, let us say, Regency furniture with modern themes of decoration but who cannot see the legitimacy of the opposite – the equally exciting use of traditional Staffordshire dinnerware, or a silk Chinese rug, for instance, with modern furniture. In fact one of the dangers of the present situation, so difficult to handle well, so easy to imitate superficially, is that debased modern clichés, studio abstracts instead of studio florals, will become worse, more popular, more cynical, more boring than the most thorough-going traditionalism – as the Cubist hangover has long been at the lower end of the carpet and linoleum industry.

Three main trends, the three more or less forward prongs of our cross-roads, are thus identifiable. First, a scared, because ignorant, dabbling in the admitted change of fashion, for which Lancashire has itself

coined the word 'semi-contemporary' without realising its forlorn implications – "we can't stay where we are but we just hate to move". Second, an all-out hell-for-leather conviction that today's mood is a classical style, a vein that won't run dry, a house with many mansions. Though admirably brave, these products run the risk of being out of date almost before they can be marketed. Thirdly, a range of textiles which are clearly seeking something different: whose producers, finding themselves – along with the whole industry – at a point of change, do not quite believe that the fashionable solution is necessarily here to stay, or at any rate that it is the whole answer; while being equally certain that straightforward traditionals are, by and large, as dead as the 'four-poster' for which they were designed. The stay-at-homers can hardly be credited with a direction: which is not to say that they do not produce some beautiful textiles for special markets – the same textiles for the same markets, institutional, liturgical, ambassadorial, palatial, whatever it may be, a little removed from house and garden of today.

Evolutionary trend

It is this third group which is most interesting. Here the newest, though not necessarily the most extreme, handwritings are to be found. Recognising the limitation and aridity of the modern school of mechanistic abstraction – pretty enough in its way but fatally easy to imitate and, in consequence, already much debased – this group has turned mostly to painters for new ideas, William Gear, William Scott, Robert Adams, J. D. H. Catleugh, Graham Sutherland; but also to painters who are professional textile designers, Humphrey Spender, Patrick Heron, Roger Nicholson, Hans Tisdall, Mary Oliver, John Drummond. But even here a dichotomy of approach is apparent, since many of these painters, to judge by their designs, are at their typical best designing purely abstract patterns: while some of the more far-sighted manufacturers would prefer to develop a more humanist, more naturalistic contemporary style if only they could find the right designers. One of the most beautiful and successful examples of this tendency is Warner & Sons' 'Ombria' print for Woollands designed by the Contessa Friedlinde di Colbertaldo Dinze, which has the bold elusive quality of Chinese brushwork, 33. Perhaps the most consistently successful designer, whose work is never merely smart but has a depth of scholarship behind it, is Roger Nicholson: his latest range for David Whitehead Ltd continuing to bridge the gap between modernity at any price and overt traditionalism.

It is pleasant to find Tootal putting out as hand-some a print as the one shown, apparently inspired by the Forth Bridge, 4. Cavendish Textiles achieves the same kind of success with 'Toronto', 27. Turnbull & Stockdale is successful with its powerful 'Sugar Cane', 29, reminiscent of Marion Dorn though still in the tradition of the best of the firm's old prints, while nothing could be better than its pink and grey 'Holly-hock' chintz, 32. One feels that some development of this kind of tradition should be the most promising line of advance, in spite of its Oriental ancestry.

Oriental influences

The degree of abstraction and formalisation achieved by Oriental art in general, ceramics, jades, flower paintings, textiles, lacquer, is and should be a fruitful source of inspiration. This taste has always suited the English, prime importers of Oriental shrubs and flowers into even the humblest garden. With its fresh but sophisticated colour, bold use of uncluttered space, attention to surface texture, and strong if seemingly casual accents, it is wholly in keeping with the contemporary handling of interior design – whether in architecture itself, Wells Coates at home, Charles Eames in California, or in furniture, Eames, Day, Saarinen, Conran, Ponti. One notices Story, whose left hand is producing John Drummond's most exciting prints, intelligently following up this line of thought with 'Helenus', 30: and Liberty's with 'Grand Marnier', 31, though here the drawing of the jugs is a little heavy for the elegant sprays of flowers. Fold this fabric so that the jars are hidden and it is seen simply with the sprays of hemlock, and it is ravishing. Less successful, though still Oriental in feeling, is Liberty's 'Fundy Bay', 1, because the unit, bold and attractive in itself, does not make a coherent pattern in repeat. Much finer is the same firm's 'Tampico', 1, printed on a rough attractive cotton cloth, one of the many examples of attention to surface texture, independent of, or rather complementary to, the print itself, which is a feature of all the best contemporary prints. This is a painter's textile reminiscent in about equal proportions of stained-glass technique and aerial surveys. Stained glass is again the dominant note of William Gear's 'Tropic', 40, for Edinburgh Weavers, originally a painting not considered in repeat. All the textiles from this specialist branch of Morton Sundour Fabrics are exciting and interesting in various ways, and are the best of arguments for suggesting that all manufacturers whose bread and butter is at present tied to big production lines, of which they may or may not be proud, should run a pilot plant to test the market with smaller

quantities of more experimental designs.

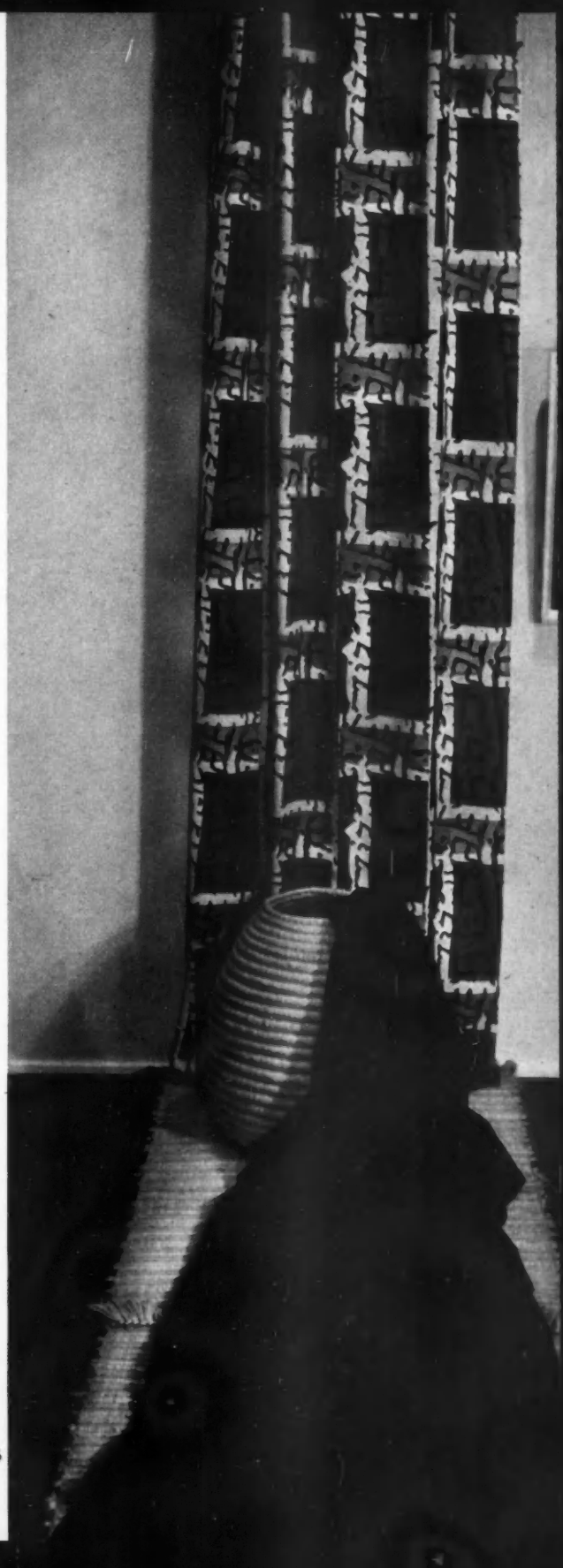
Heal's has for some time developed a strong line of its own, which is notably successful in the export market but leans a little towards an intellectual *froideur*. Within this genre, however, 'Crescents' by Paul Vesselay, 28, is as pretty as anything produced for a long time, and 'Isosceles' by Lucienne Day, 2, as bold and decorative. More broadly based are David Whitehead's range by J. D. H. Catleugh, Mitzi Cunliffe, 24, Eileen Bell, and John Piper, 25; but except for the wholly satisfying harlequin design by Catleugh these are hardly as good as the best of Nicholson or Jacqueline Groag for the same firm. Sanderson Fabrics contribute two interesting prints, a strong and useful abstract which is at its best in the black, white and yellow version, 21, and a pattern of linked lozenges on a black ground in which, however, the drawing of the floral panels is only quite successful in the black and yellow version, 22. Finally, via some excellent prints by Donald Brothers, 20 and 26, and Horrockses, 6 and 23, both of which firms belong pre-eminently to the forward looking group, we come to the weaves, of which the best is probably Donald Brothers' characteristic 'Birch', 11.

Few good weaves

The woven textiles are on the whole less interesting than the prints. It is understandable why this should be so because their average design content has for some time been high, and there is less room for spectacular manoeuvre, and because an elaborate Jacquard is expensive to produce. At the same time the costs involved are no less for the French and Italian industries, which produce woven textiles every bit as exciting as their prints – and cloth for cloth an interesting weave will always beat a print.

In general the picture is encouraging. There can be no doubt that it is far easier to find in the shops today pretty, cheap, effective textiles than it has been for many decades. The acres of *écru* cretonne covered with caramel chrysanthemums, beige roses, brown hydrangeas, dead patterns from exhausted studios; the string-and-porridge school, still fighting a dusty rearguard action with three-dimensional wallpapers, are at last being swept away by a new and vigorous spring. But spring comes late to the mills. The impression remains that the industry as a whole is changing only because it must find *some* way of selling the necessary yardage, and not always because it has realised that good modern design is not merely its best bet but its only hope, in the face of other textile-producing nations which have got the picture somewhat clearer.

6 Two designs by Horrockses on an attractive rough-textured fabric which has a quality of its own. The top design is by William Gear and the bottom one by Isabella Wick. These fabrics are both inexpensive.





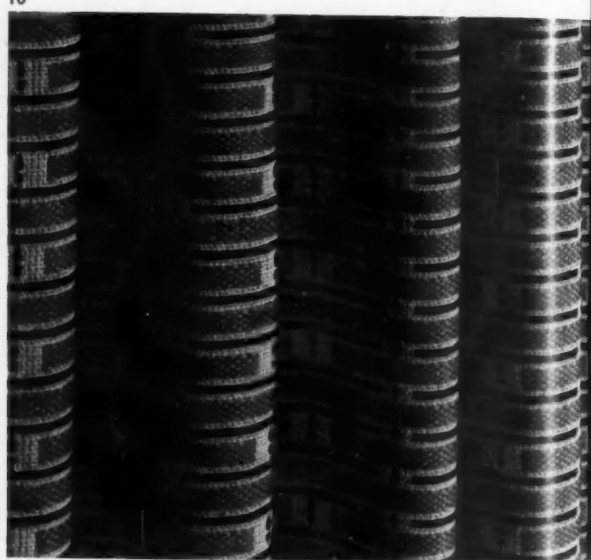
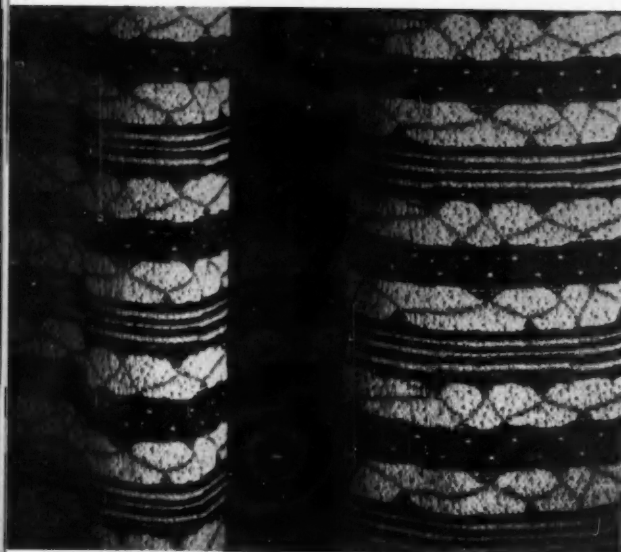
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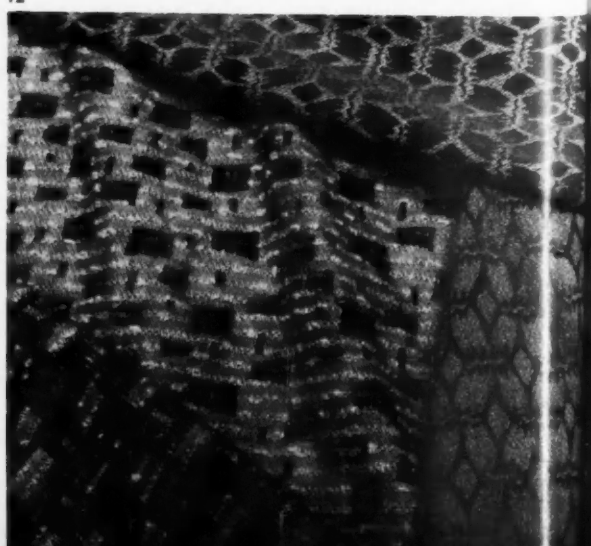
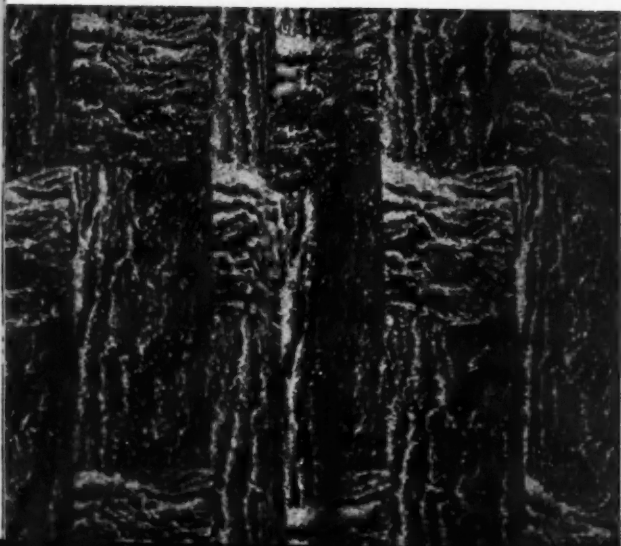
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7 Warner & Sons' 'Tresco' designed by Allan Brooks. A charming two-tone weave of Oriental blandness and fine manners, very much in the tradition of the firm.

8 'Fisherman's Tale' designed by Hilda Durkin for Edinburgh Weavers - a woven furnishing in rayon and cotton. This was given an award by the American Institute of Decorators as one of the best winning designs of 1955, Hilda Durkin being the only British designer to be honoured with this distinction.

9 'Conifer', an attractive black and white woven design in heavy cotton from Gayonnes, by Mary Middleton. The surface texture produced between the horizontal stripes is apparent even in illustration.

10 A sedately modern weave of fresh colour and useful scale from Sanderson Fabrics. Designed in cotton by Helen Close.

11 'Birch', by Donald Brothers, was designed by William Robertson and is one of the most interesting weaves that has appeared for a long time. It is subtle in detail, bold in scale, and with pleasing qualities of drape and handle.

12 Two woven furnishings in viscose by Courtauld's. There is an effort here to do something more interesting than usual by giving a textural effect to the small Jacquard weaves.

13 Tibor's 'Helico' and 'Mesh', both designed by Tibor Reich, continue the long range of interesting weaves produced by this forward looking company. 'Mesh' is only one of a number of Jacquard designs breaking new ground, and deserves the highest praise.

13



14 Warner's 'Elmset' is a beautiful if not ostentatiously modern Jacquard, designed originally for silk by Kathleen Veevers, but now produced in rayon. The designer was still a student at the Royal College of Art when this fabric was first produced.



15

15 'Baroque Musicale', an elaborate tapestry design by Hans Tisdall for Edinburgh Weavers. Though perhaps a trifle angular in construction, this textile gives an impression of great richness and sumptuous colour.

16 Ramm, Son & Crocker's 'Gothic Windows' a cloth of lace-like delicacy whose success is chiefly due to the use of a close-toned colour scheme in pale mauves, browns and yellows.

17 Stevenson & Son's successful modernisation of a Jacobean theme in Moygashel fabric. The design achieves considerable spontaneity in spite of its well worn subject matter, and the colour is fresh and charming.

18 John Drummond's 'Cefalu' for Story (Fabrics) Ltd is one of a series of masterly prints produced by this firm with the aid of Drummond's own screens. One of the latest has been chosen for the new V I P lounge at London Airport.

17



18

19 'Amazon' from Gayonnes has a strong hint of traditional 'cretonne' design, but it is bold in scale and considerably simplified and refreshed with clear bright colour.

20 'Woodlands' is an agreeable design by Peter Simpson for Donald Brothers. There are a variety of designs built up on the collage or dictionary manner, such as this, which are extremely popular in modern decoration.

21 A fine print on plain cotton from Sanderson Fabrics. The severe black, white and yellow edition is more successful than the other colourways in which it is produced. Designed by Walter Krauer.

22 Another Sanderson design, perhaps not so successful as the example above because the lozenges are not very well related to each other. The interior drawing is nevertheless original and effective. Designed by Bente Lorenz.

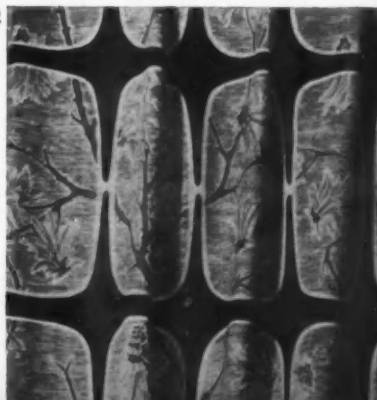
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23 A charming line-drawing, equally reminiscent of Klee and Steinberg, decorates this printed cotton by Horrockses. It was designed by Beryl Coles and is a good example of the lightness and elegance to be found in some modern furnishings.

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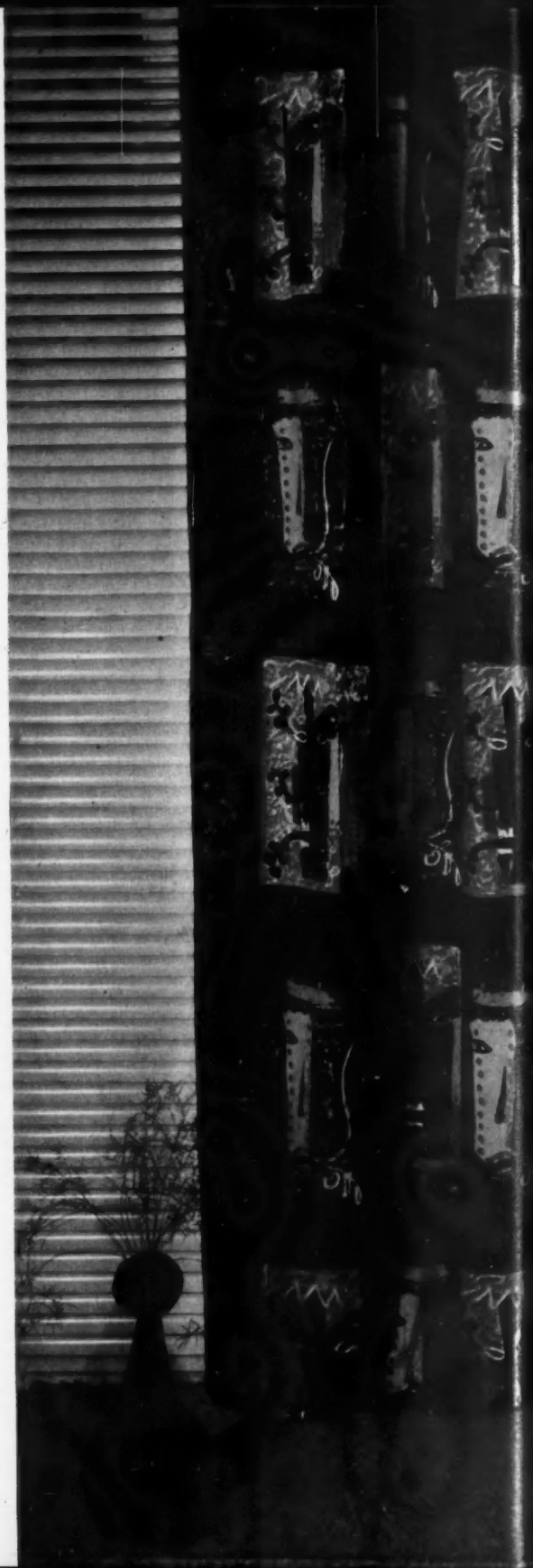


24 Almost naturalistic drawing of leaves and ferns given a formal quality by alternate bands of background colour, in this design by Mitzi Cunliffe for David Whitehead. Whitehead's has pioneered the use of abstract designs in furnishing textiles, but this illustration shows a significant variation.

25 One of John Piper's rich pictorial textiles, in a new range by David Whitehead of designs by this well known painter. The painting on which this was based was originally shown in the Exhibition 'Paintings into Textiles' sponsored by The Ambassador at the ICA Gallery.

26

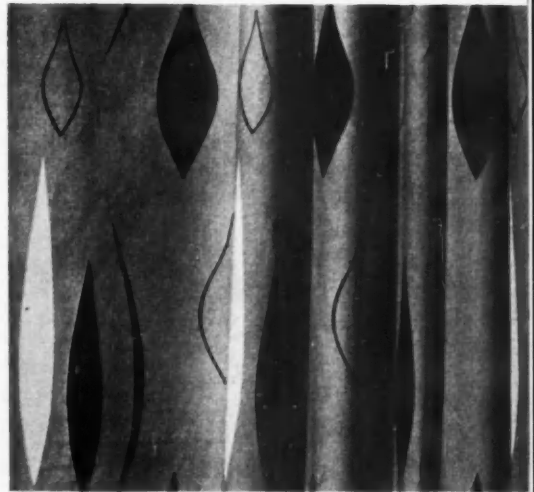
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26 James Lacey's magnificent 'Sunflower' design produced in various colourings by Donald Brothers. This is a good example of the marked return to the use of conventional design motifs – flowers for instance – used unconventionally.

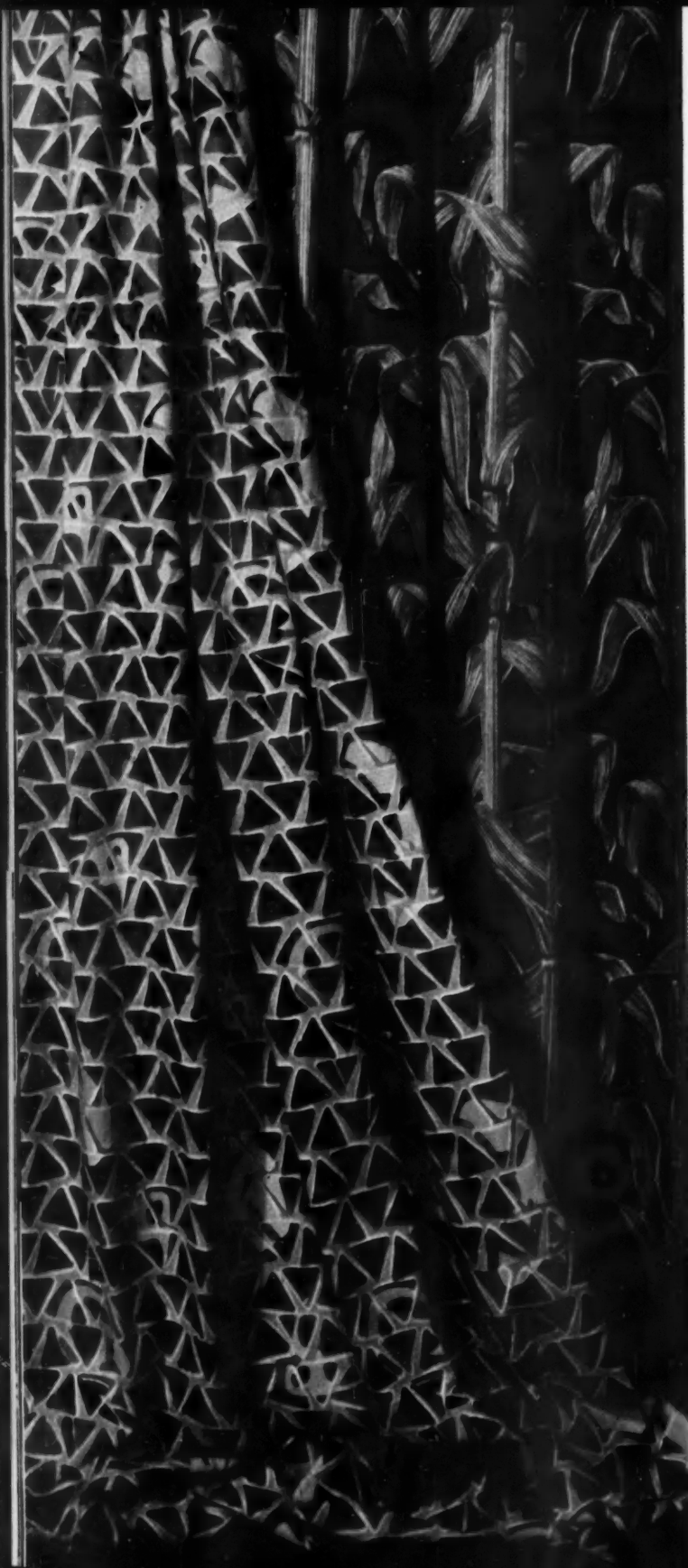
27 This charming print in black, white and yellow, by Cavendish Textiles, could almost be an enlarged version of a miniature Victorian dress print. Designed by F. Fish.

27



28

28 Heal's 'Crescents' by Paule Vézelay is perhaps the most distinguished and versatile of all the designs shown lately by this always enterprising firm.



- 29 Two fabrics by Turnbull & Stockdale of very different type. 'Sugar Cane' is one of the most striking and successful of the various designs based on bamboo and cane. Large scale and bold, but sympathetic, drawing distinguish it from its competitors. The design on the left is much less obtrusive and will be easy to use where other items of room decoration dominate.



30

- 30 Story's 'Helemus' uses a conventional type of floral spray, which is excellent of its kind, on a textile of strong surface interest. The rough slub cotton does not show in the illustration. The result is a furnishing textile admirably suited to the more ornate style now becoming popular in modern schemes of decoration.



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All three designs on this page show strong Oriental influence.

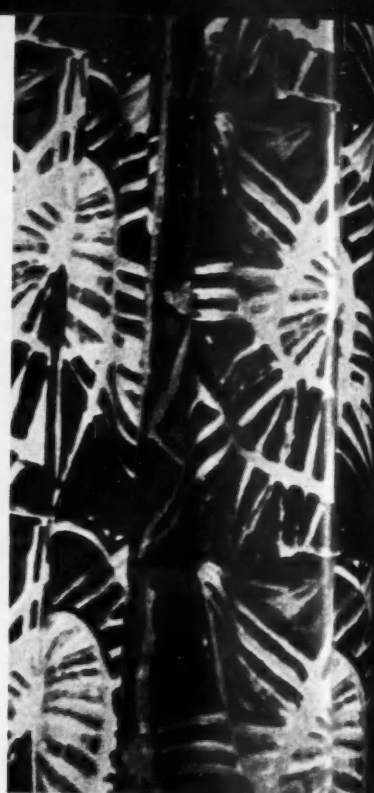
31 'Grand Marnier' designed by Anthony Levitt-Prinsep for Liberty, looking spikily Japanese against the obvious Chinese influence in 32 and 33. There is also a suggestion here, artificially contrived, of a return to mid-nineteenth century block printing.

32 Possibly the most beautiful chintz on the market - Turnbull & Stockdale's 'Hollyhock'. The colouring is of an inexpressibly subtle combination of pinks and greys: it is impossible to imagine any period when this design could look anything but right.

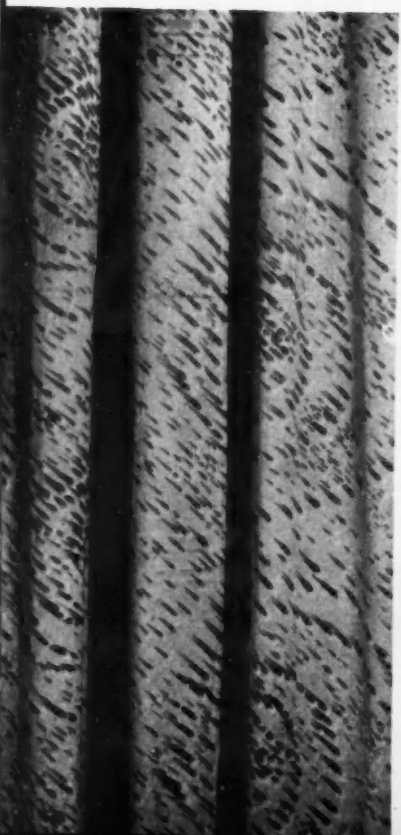
33 'Ombria', Warner's wonderful tour de force for Woollands, designed by the Contessa Friedlinde di Colbertaldo Dinze, is clearly inspired by Chinese brushwork. Although this has all the look of a modern textile, it promises not to date, just as 32 does not, and against which it holds its own with equal ease and elegance.



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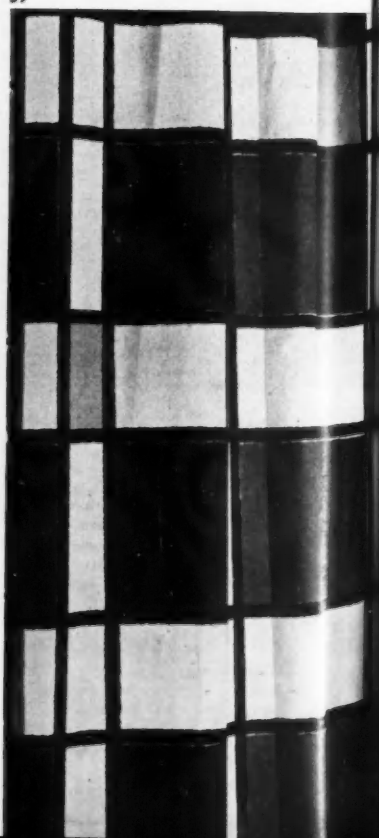
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◀ Fabrics from abroad

34 Natural forms are combined with abstract shapes in this design by Elspeth Kupferoth. It was made by Pausa A/G Mössingen.

35 'Tam-tam', a printed cotton by Manifattura I S A, Italy, is striking in colour and bold in scale. The design, by Gio Pavesi, is highly organised in spite of its superficial abstraction.

36 In the same genre is this powerful printed fabric by Corinne Steinrisser, a Swiss artist. Its vitality made it one of the most admired at the last 'Triennale' in Milan.

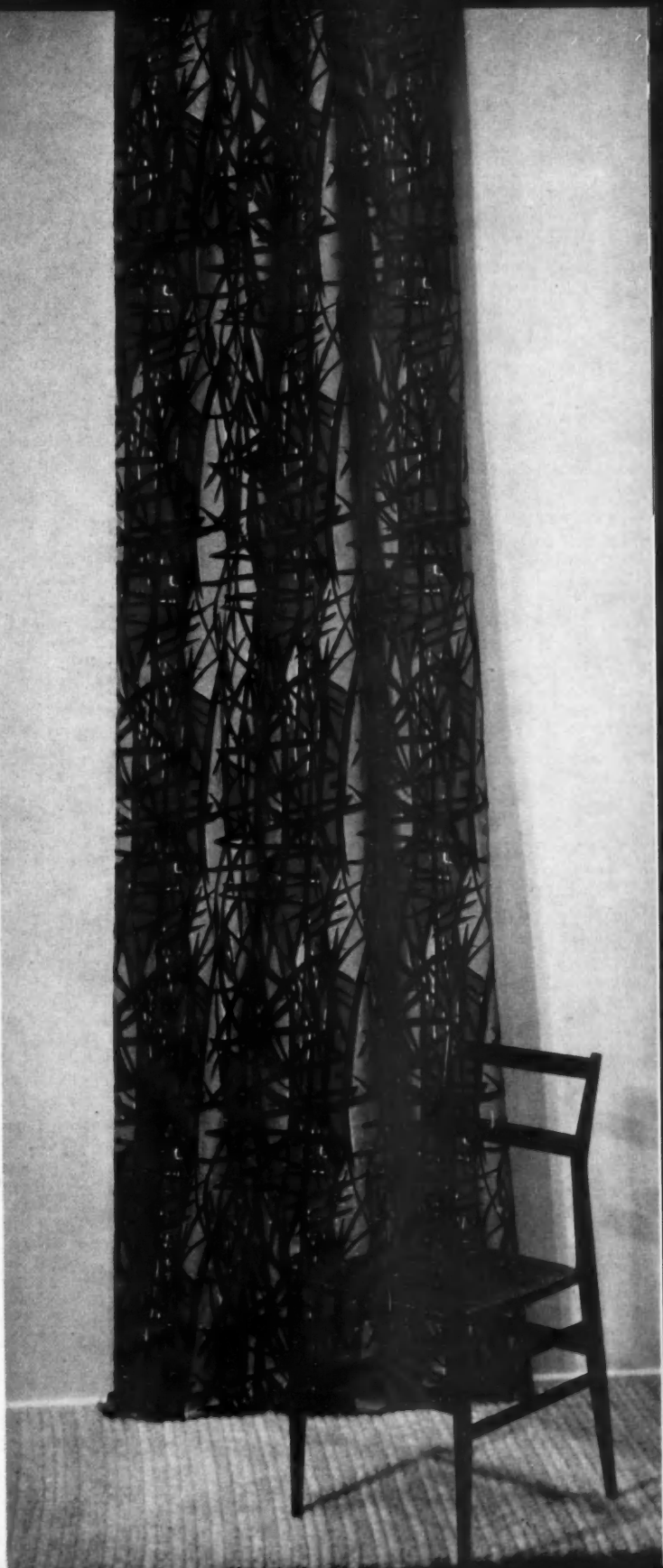
37 'Concetto spaziale' was designed by Lucio Fontana and manufactured by Manifattura I S A, of Italy. An example of a furnishing fabric where printing has taken over the traditional function of woven design, creating an apparent surface interest on an otherwise plain cloth. A subtle and successful abstract pattern.

38 Line drawings of studied simplicity give an archaic fragmentary character to this patchwork design by Piero Zuffi for Manifattura I S A.

39 'Modulor' by Astrid Sampe of Stockholm for the Nordiska Kompaniet: one of this designer's apparently simple but highly sophisticated arrangements of pure colour in rectangular frames.

40 'Tropic', one of William Gear's new designs for Edinburgh Weavers. This strong and exciting print belongs to a series done by Gear for this company, and is also an outcome of the original project sponsored by The Ambassador (see 25). It is typical of the search for new handwritings now occupying the thoughts of the most progressive manufacturers, and of the consequent flirtation with certain schools of painting.

Our thanks are due to Woollands of Knightsbridge for permission to photograph in their Modern Interior department a number of the fabrics illustrated.



THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT CAMPAIGN

The famous 'Widow', the most talked-about poster of the Ministry's campaign. This was much criticised, eventually mentioned in the House of Commons, and finally withdrawn. In the end, the controversy produced even better publicity for the subject than the poster itself.

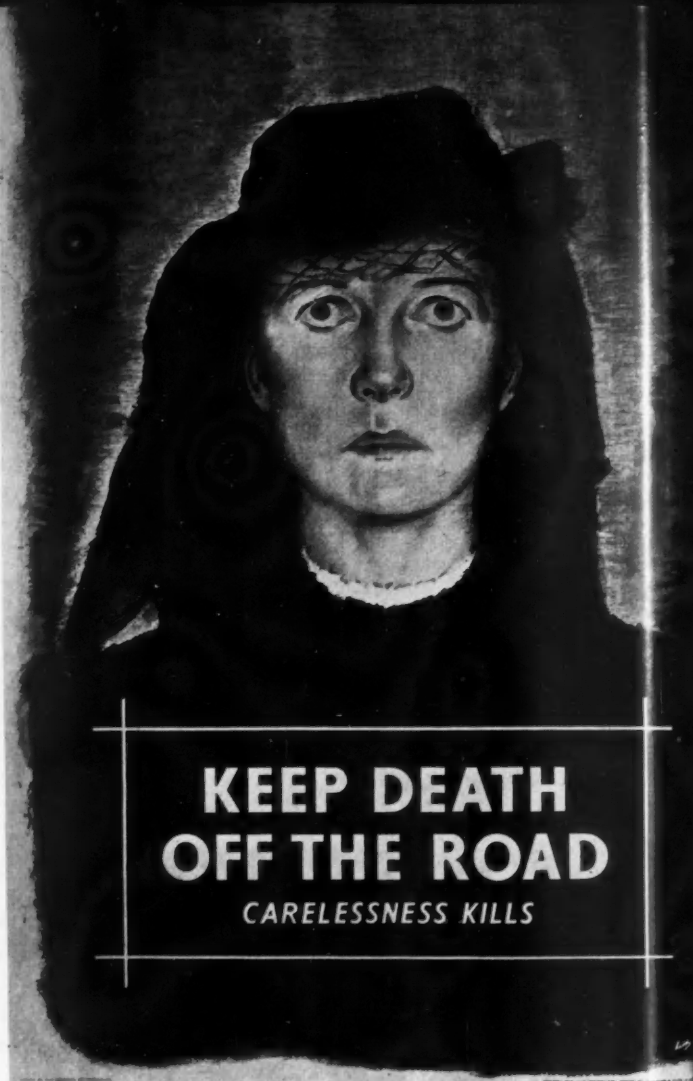
WASTE ON THE ROADS

Peter Sieber

Past

5,010 people were killed and 233,271 injured in road accidents in Great Britain during 1954.

Road safety posters have been used for very many years in a limited way. In 1944, however, this country was the first in the world to initiate a large government-sponsored publicity campaign for road safety. It was directed by the Ministry of Transport and involved the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds per year. All the usual advertising media were used, including posters in a range of sizes up to 48-sheet (10 ft by 20 ft) on important sites, and extensive advertising in the national Press and magazines. The Ministry of Transport maintained a good creative standard and was not afraid to tackle this serious problem with healthy realism.



Present

Unfortunately, the Ministry's campaign was virtually abandoned in 1946. Since then all public relations activities connected with road safety have been in the hands of local governments, and the Ministry pays to them one-half of all their expenses: it can veto expenditure, but does not normally initiate work. The present total expenditure on publicity and various local functions and demonstrations is about £350,000 per year. On the whole the results are far from satisfactory.

The only central organisation which now originates publicity material is the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. RoSPA designs and produces posters, printed matter, and many kinds of road safety novelties, and offers these to local councils at cost



Featuring the old 'Highway Code'. (In a range of sizes up to 10 ft by 20 ft.)



Chiefly for use in public houses.



A sound press advertisement, making the detailed points, combined with a striking poster that does not distract the road user.



SOME RoSPA POSTERS



Two simple and attractive posters for pedestrians and motorists.



For public houses.



A vivid safety poster.



RoSPA features a distinct main theme for each quarter. From July to September 1954, the special campaign was for children's highway safety. This is a good series and the photographic treatment is effective. The main poster (left) in sizes up to 10 ft by 6 ft 8 inches and supporting posters (right) available only in 1 ft 8 inches by 2 ft 6 inches.



The main poster for the new 'Highway Code' is available in sizes up to 10 ft by 6 ft 8 inches.

The general standard of the design of this material is good; a few of the posters are excellent. RoSPA, too, is not afraid of realism; when addressing children, however, RoSPA quite rightly aims at co-operation rather than at intimidation, and presents road discipline as an interesting and competitive game.

Each of the 1,200 local governments is free to decide whether or not to use RoSPA material, and even if it does, RoSPA has no control over the selection of poster sites or the distribution of poster material. Some boroughs fully co-operate with RoSPA and put its material to good use. But in many boroughs where RoSPA posters are used, the sites are too small to be of any practical value or in unsuitable positions. In several other boroughs, councils rely on material produced locally – some of it amateurish and feeble.

There seems to be little planning between one district and the next; the whole effort is patchy and the all-important repetition of the advertised message is lost.

No sane commercial undertaking would entrust its publicity to local agents, each to do as he pleases, yet this is what is being done in the road safety campaign.* There is virtually no advertising in the national Press, and without that no public relations campaign can be complete.

Future

Publicity for accident prevention presents a particularly difficult problem, since it must create a

* By comparison with the £350,000 per annum now being spent on road safety publicity, last year's advertising budgets for a few well-known firms were: Ovaltine – £160,755, Guinness – £216,760, Esso Petroleum – £377,598, Stork Margarine – £410,603.

A 20-MILE DRIVE THROUGH MAIN STREETS IN LONDON

The posters addressed to motorists have been photographed from the nearest points from which drivers could see them from their vehicles.

1 *Marylebone Town Hall.* The posters for pedestrians may be of some value, but those addressed to motorists are useful here only if motorists happen to be going into the Town Hall.

2 *Baker Street (Marylebone).* Believe it or not, this poster is addressed to motorists. It would certainly be dangerous for any driver to attempt to read the message while driving.

3 *Euston Road (St Pancras).* This splendid poster in this poor position has clearly received canine rather than human attention.

4 *Pentonville Road.* This panel, obscured by wire, has posters which are fairly up to date. But the three different posters, for different road users, tend to be confusing and they are altogether far too small.

5 *The Angel (Islington).* No layout: not thought out. This poor specimen is the only poster larger than 2 ft 6 inches by 1 ft 8 inches seen on the whole of the trip.

6 *Blackfriars Road.* RoSPA posters do not seem to be used in Southwark; instead there are a large number of posters identical to the one shown here. In itself it is not particularly good, but since it is used en masse, the overall impact in this borough is greater than in any other of those visited - compelling proof of the importance of repetition.

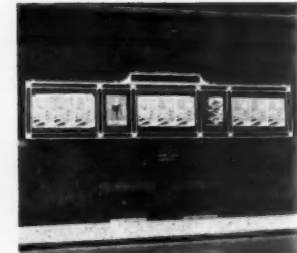
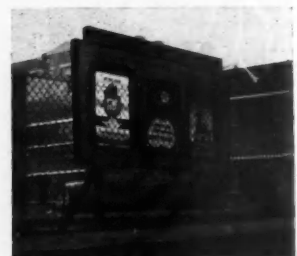
7 *Charing Cross Road.* Throughout Holborn, RoSPA posters are used together with a map showing danger spots in the district. This is clearly for pedestrians, especially to those with enough leisure to study the panel.

8 *Sydney Street (Chelsea).* Here, at long last, the same poster repeated several times. This is much stronger than all different posters in a row.

* * * * *

With seven minor omissions these are all the posters noticed over 20 miles in nine London boroughs. No posters were noticed in Regent Street, Piccadilly, Parliament Square. Very good posters are available from RoSPA, but they are simply not used enough to create any useful impact.

Photographs by SAM LAMBERT



constant attitude of mind to last every minute a person walks or drives. The only way in which it can be solved seems to be a centralised nation-wide campaign, employing all available advertising media: the national Press, commanding posters, the cinema, radio and television. The campaign should reach all road-users when they are at rest - at home, in the cinema - as well as on the roads. In execution it should contain both stark realism (for adults) and educational persuasion (for children).

Apart from the general scheme, a few details might be given more attention. For instance, why does one hardly ever see a road safety poster at a garage - the very place where motorists are sure to be at rest? Again, since more accidents happen at night, per road

user, why is so little done to bring this home and why are so few posters illuminated? Finally, many crossings are known to have a high accident rate; why cannot such danger spots be marked by a recognised sign?

All this will cost money. But then, under the Government's road building programme, work authorised during the next four years will involve an expenditure of £120 million. This essential programme should help to reduce traffic accidents, but its effects will be felt only in years to come. A fraction of that amount devoted to publicity now could lower the accident rate immediately. And even without the allocation of any additional funds, the present £350,000 spent more wisely could play a far more important part in reducing waste on the roads.

FURNITURE *survey*

Storage units

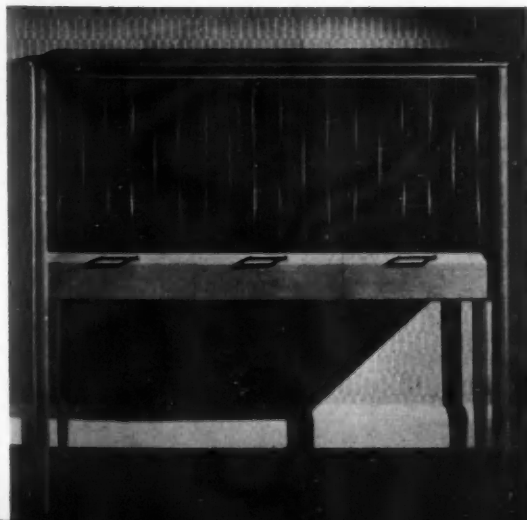
A. GARDNER-MEDWIN

One of a series of articles on modern furniture selected from 'Design Review', the illustrated record of current British products to be seen at the London headquarters of the Council of Industrial Design.

The following groups
of furniture are included
in the survey

Fully upholstered chairs	MARCH
Dining tables and chairs	APRIL
Occasional chairs . . .	MAY
Bedroom furniture . . .	JUNE
All-purpose chairs . . .	JULY
Occasional furniture .	SEPTEMBER
Outdoor furniture .	OCTOBER
Kitchen furniture .	NOVEMBER

STORAGE SPACE for the things we use, as well as for decorative objects, is a problem which is always present in the small house or flat. It is a necessity that is slowly being realised by manufacturers, as shown by the many varieties of storage units which have recently appeared on the market. However, it is not always convenient to use a set of wall units, 4. A standard piece of furniture such as a sideboard or a chest of drawers can serve the purpose of general storage in the living-room, and can also be an interesting and decorative addition to it, 1. Too few of the sideboards used in the



*High sideboard in beech with veneers of mansonia.
DESIGNER H. E. Long. MAKER Heal & Son Ltd.*

dining-room can accommodate all the things needed for the table. There is frequently considerable waste of space, though some sideboards have been well thought out to take as many utensils as possible, 2 and 14. There is also much to be said in favour of a high storage cupboard in place of the traditional low sideboard, where one does not wish to serve from it.

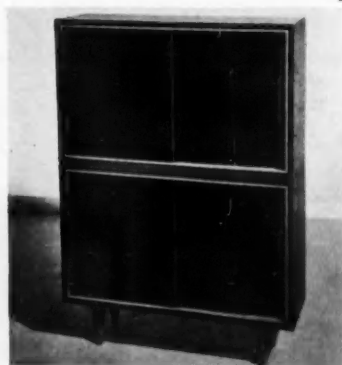
The unit furniture first introduced before the war and now an accepted feature in many homes has enlarged the scope of storage pieces by enabling them to be stacked either vertically or horizontally along the wall, 6 and 7. The fact that such pieces can be bought individually and added to as required makes them an economic proposition and has added greatly to their popularity. A more recent method of dealing with storage and display is the wall unit which

includes both open shelves and boxes, which are adjustable. Here metal seems a sensible material for the ladder, as the necessary strength can be obtained with only a small section, whereas wood requires a heavier section which tends to make the unit look cumbersome, and can destroy the pleasant suspended effect of the cabinets and shelves. The main advantage of these wall units is their extreme flexibility and the fact that such things as radios, gramophones and record storage can be neatly and unobtrusively incorporated. So far there are few examples of the free-standing unit, 11, which is useful to divide a room. There are obvious possibilities for this type of furniture, however, and the form of storage it provides will become more common as it can be adapted to the modern living-dining room.

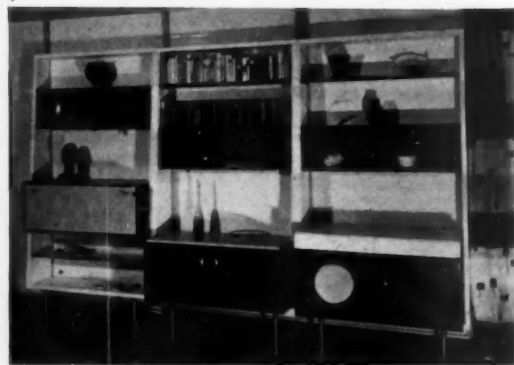


2 Sideboard in oak with Macassar ebony doors. DESIGNER Robert Heritage. MAKER G. W. Evans Ltd.

3 Storage cabinet veneered with French walnut. Sliding doors are covered with PVC fabric. DESIGNER Meredew Design Group. MAKER D. Meredew Ltd.



4 Wall fittings in enamelled wood with storage cabinets and shelves veneered in rosewood. Front panels of bureau and top of cocktail cabinet are leather covered. Brass legs. DESIGNER A. J. Milne. MAKER Heal & Son Ltd.

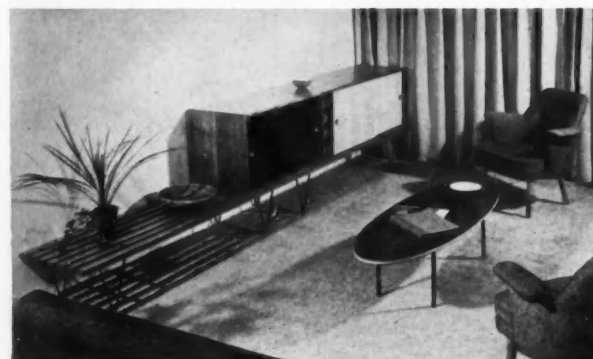




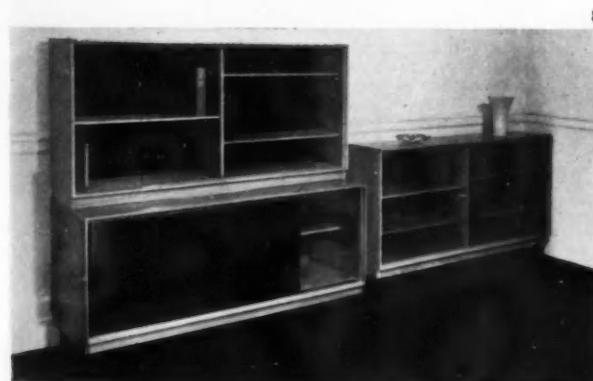
5 Unit sideboards in African mahogany with veneers of Canadian flame birch and rosewood. Brass handles. DESIGNER Ian Henderson Studio. MAKER Ian Henderson Ltd.



6 Unit furniture in mahogany framed with ebonised banding. DESIGNER Ward & Austin. MAKER Loughborough Cabinet Manufacturing Co.

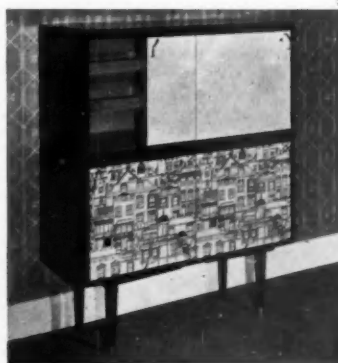


7 Solid mahogany carcasses veneered with Brazilian rosewood and ash. Brass handles. Also available on wood or metal legs. DESIGNER Robin Day. MAKER S. Hille & Co Ltd.



8 Bookcases and storage unit in Japanese elm with elm and rosewood veneers. DESIGNER Professor R. D. Russell. MAKER Gordon Russell Ltd.

9 Storage unit in multiply veneered holly and ebonised elm, with screen-printed design on lower doors. Brass feet and handles. DESIGNER R. Heritage and D. Heritage. MAKER G. W. Evans Ltd.



11 *Partition fitment in agba. DESIGNER Geoffrey Dunn. MAKER Dunn's of Bromley.*

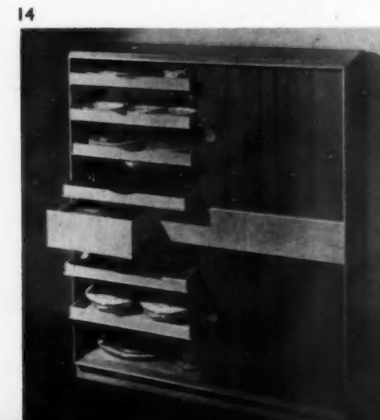
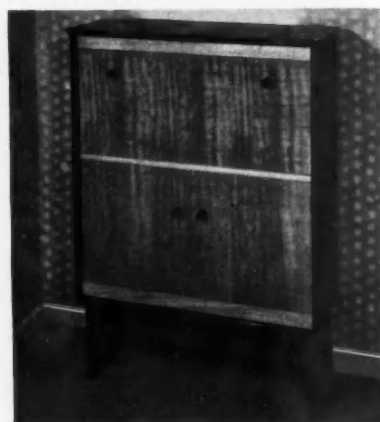
12 *Cocktail-bureau cabinet in tola with natural and ebony finish. Mahogany lined with Formica drop-down flap. MAKER Procanta Manufacturing Co Ltd.*



10 *Bookcase and cupboard fitment in natural oak. MAKER E. Gomme Ltd.*

13 *Bookcase and cupboard units in natural walnut. DESIGNER Neil Morris. MAKER H. Morris & Co Ltd.*

14 *Storage cupboard with trays in natural beech and elm veneers. DESIGNER Frank Guille. MAKER Kandya Ltd.*



NEWS

CONFERENCES

Design for education

At a recent meeting at the CoID, some teachers in London schools discussed with L.C.C. Art Inspectors and staff of the CoID the experience of the past four years, since the experiment in teaching the appreciation of design was started. So far eleven exhibitions have been mounted, with money provided by the L.C.C. In addition, two sets of empty display cases are now being used in schools as settings for 'home-made' exhibitions, based on objects either made by the children or brought by them from home. From the answers to a questionnaire which was circulated and from other observations in schools, the most successful exhibitions were those based on one material (clay, wood, glass, leather) where the progression from material through method to finished object is clear to the child. When there is real appreciation in this respect, the child has a basis of judgment for other materials and objects. Those concerned in the experiment thought it had had a most remarkable success in tackling the problem of encouraging the appreciation of good design in schools, and hoped it might be possible to continue it. Points of value were that it was possible for each child to handle the objects, and thus to appreciate the qualities of texture and form; and that the exhibitions remained in each school for a term, giving the children the opportunity of returning to them again and again.

SIA Regional group

The Midland Regional group of the SIA recently held its inaugural meeting in Birmingham when Ernest Race, representing the SIA Council, welcomed the formation of the group as an important step in the decentralizing of design activities – a necessary procedure if design, and designers, are to flourish in the major industrial areas. The well attended meeting included SIA members from leading firms in Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton. The first Midland committee consists of Robert Cantor, Thomas Gray, N. Wilkinson, M. Bannister, J. Gregory and A. H. Woodfull.

Annual conference

Sir Gordon Russell, Director of the CoID, will read a paper at the annual conference of the Institute of Public Supplies Officers at Ashorne Hill, near Leamington Spa, on Friday, September 23.

EXHIBITIONS

Basle Fair

In a number of trades, but especially in precision engineering, the Swiss show a remarkable aptitude for good design, but there was a great deal of bad design at the Basle Fair (DESIGN March page 52). Considerable ingenuity was exercised in adapting the worst features of tiled stoves for oil and the bulbous mouldings of Germanic furniture in chipboard veneered in a bag press! It was interesting, therefore, to hear from the director of the fair, Herr Hauswirth, that he believed wholeheartedly in

the selective experiment carried out in the fair by Herr Altherr, director of the Swiss Werkbund. A considerable area – 250 sq metres – had been allocated, which was larger than in the two previous years. A selection panel of 16 people appointed by the Werkbund was split into five separate committees, each of which was responsible for particular sections of the fair. Each committee spent the first two days on which the fair was open in careful examination of every stand. Any object which reached the required design standard was awarded a label, valid for one year, and the firm was given a diploma. By working at top speed, these diplomas were distributed by the fourth day, so that they could be displayed on the stand. Firms value the diplomas and labels: they leap to the eye at many points on a tour of the exhibition. The goods selected this year will be shown in the Werkbund exhibit next year. The difficulties of getting duplicates immediately and staging them adequately are no doubt considerable, but from a publicity point of view, it would seem to be very valuable to overcome them, even if the display had to be of the simplest kind. Some unit furniture, linoleum, taps, switches, kitchen equipment and, of course, sports goods, reached a high standard. It was interesting to see that the excellent Horgen-Glarus bentwood chair, which is shown on the cover of the Werkbund catalogue, was first produced 40 years ago, and is still given a label each year. How many articles will stand up to such a rigorous test?

Atomic energy at Geneva

The United Kingdom is to hold two exhibitions, on the peaceful uses of atomic energy, in Geneva from August 8–20. They will coincide with the International Conference of Scientists, under the auspices of the United Nations, to which 84 countries have been invited. One exhibition of a purely scientific character and intended principally for members of delegations will be staged by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority at the Palais des Nations. Covering an area of 3,000 sq ft it will be mainly concerned with nuclear reactors for research and for the generation of power, and with specialised instruments which Britain has developed. The second exhibition, in the Palais des Expositions, will be open both to delegations and to the general public. In an area of 5,000 sq ft United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority exhibits will provide a general survey of the peaceful applications of atomic energy in Britain. The subjects presented will include Britain's first atomic power station, now being built at Calder Hall; the ten-year power station programme; isotope applications in industry, medicine and agriculture; and nucleonics. To co-ordinate the commercial exhibits a central committee has been formed, under the chairmanship of Eric H. Underwood, Director of Public Relations to the Authority.

Strasbourg European fair

The European Fair of Strasbourg, which celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year, will be held from September 3–18. It will be opened by President Coty. Although Strasbourg is a general trade fair, three of its largest sections are devoted to agricultural machinery, building and public works, and office equipment. The organisers, however, are planning to enlarge a number of other sections and, in particular, the food and wine section (hitherto largely confined to home produce) to include British food and drinks. Further information, including details about costs and conditions of participation, can be obtained from the United Kingdom agent: R. C. Liebman, 178 Fleet Street, London EC4. (Telephone: City 5889.)



Bicentenary medal

Sir Charles Tennyson, until lately Secretary of the Dunlop Rubber Co Ltd, has been awarded the Bicentenary Medal of the Royal Society of Arts. This medal is awarded annually "to the person who in a manner other than as an industrial designer has exerted an exceptional influence in promoting art and design in British industry". Sir Charles has consistently given support to the idea of improving design standards for a great many years. He formed and was Chairman for twenty-five years of the Industrial Art Committee of the Federation of British Industries; was Chairman, throughout its career, of the National Register of Industrial Art Designers and of the war-time Central Institute of Art and Design. He has been Chairman of the Design and Industries Association and served on the Council of the Royal College of Art, of which he is a Fellow, from 1937 to 1950. He is also an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists. During the war he was Chairman of the Utility Furniture Committee and Furniture Production Committee at the Board of Trade, where his influence led to a much higher standard of design in utility furniture than was expected. Sir Charles was an original member of the Council of Industrial Design when it was set up in 1944 and Chairman of its Information Committee from 1949 until 1952, when he went to live on the East Coast. There can be no doubt whatever that the award is richly deserved.

Building Exhibition

The twenty-sixth Building Exhibition will be held at Olympia, London, from November 16–30, and an extensive range of building materials, plant and equipment will be staged there by more than 50 industries concerned with building. Held every two years, the exhibition presents the progress of building methods, and each successive exhibition introduces new exhibits and features new techniques. This year the exhibition will meet the demand for new ideas and equipment from an industry stronger now than at any time since the war, and facing record expansion in all kinds of building – housing, new factories, schools, hospitals, power stations and defence installations. The emphasis will

be on the new techniques, mechanised equipment for speedy production, newly developed materials and new ways of construction. In each exhibition a special display deals with developments in a basic building material. In 1953 prestressed concrete was featured, and this year several firms are individually exhibiting this important technique. The feature this year will be the use of timber in building. The governments of the timber-exporting countries throughout the world are co-operating in focussing attention on new technical developments in the use of timber. Other displays will include the section devoted to new building techniques which are making rapid advances in the building industry, and a number of systems for housing, schools and industrial purposes will be shown. The exhibition is held under the patronage of H M Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

COMPETITIONS

Mickiewicz competition

To commemorate the centenary of the death of the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz the Polish Cultural Institute is organising a book illustration competition. Three prizes of 75, 40 and 20 guineas are offered for the best sets of three illustrations, a title page and a tailpiece decoration or three illustrations and a cover design, for a volume of poems by Mickiewicz to be published in English. Illustrations for the book will be selected from the prize-winning entries. Designs should be executed in one colour and be suitable for reproduction by line block for letterpress printing. All entries should be submitted by October 31. The jury will consist of Edward Ardizzone, John Berger, James Boswell, Roy Fuller, Paul Hogarth, Charles Rosner and William Stobbs. Further details and the poems to be illustrated may be obtained from the Polish Cultural Institute, 81 Portland Place, London, W1.

RSA bursaries

Peter Douglas Durden, who won a bursary in the domestic electrical appliances section in the RSA competition for 1953, has again received an award in the 1954 competition. Mr Durden, of the Birmingham College of Art and Crafts, is aged 18. The names of the winners in the other sections of the 1954 competition are announced in a recent publication of the RSA, together with details of the 1955 competition.

Carpet competition

'Furnishing' announces its seventeenth Carpet Design Competition. Prizes are offered by the organisers and also by the Federation of British Carpet Manufacturers and the Orient Steam Navigation Co Ltd. The competition is open to students and everyone in the carpet trade. The closing date for the receipt of designs is September 19, 1955. Full particulars may be obtained from the Editor, 'Furnishing', Drury House, Russell Street, London WC2.

Mayor's jewel of office

Sir Gordon Russell, Director of the CoID, was one of the judges in the recent competition for a mayor's jewel of office organised by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. The mayoral jewel for evening wear is to be acquired by the Corporation of Bolton to give effect to a public benefaction by James W. Wiggleworth of Bolton. The winner was E. G. Clements, for Payne & Son Ltd, who gained the first prize of £120. The joint second prize of £30 each went to E. M. Dinkel and Jean Rice.



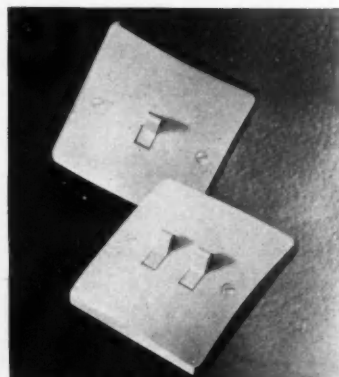
▲ Handles for a carving set made by Birkleys for Platers & Stampers Ltd.

Selected designs in plastics

A new venture at the 'British Plastics Exhibition' this year, held recently at Olympia, was a special display of well-designed products chosen from the goods on show. The display was arranged by the Design Committee of the British Plastics Institute, a body set up to encourage higher standards of design from the plastics industry. The Design Committee appointed an independent selection panel consisting of Misha Black, Sir Francis Meynell and Sir Gordon Russell. Some of the 30 designs chosen are illustrated here.



▲ Hand microphone made by Halex Ltd for the Dictaphone Co Ltd.



▲ Electric switch. The switchplate was designed by the Product Design Unit of BIP Chemicals Ltd in conjunction with the maker M K Electric Ltd.

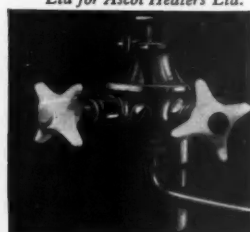
▼ Decorated plate made by Ornapress A G, Switzerland, and shown by the British Oxygen Co Ltd. British agent, Fred Ferarri (Clerkenwell) Ltd.



▼ Bucket made by Rediwell Ltd.



▼ Tap handles made by Streetly Manufacturing Co Ltd for Ascot Heaters Ltd.



MISCELLANEOUS

'Ave atque vale'

It is particularly pleasant to report the award of the CBE by the Queen to Mr A. E. Hewitt, Managing Director of W. T. Copeland & Sons Ltd, but unfortunately we have, with very great regret, to announce at the same time his resignation from the CoID on account of ill health. Mr Hewitt's work for the pottery industry, especially as President of the British Pottery Manufacturers' Federation, is well known, and he has proved a loyal, devoted and popular Council member since his appointment by the President of the Board of Trade in March 1953. Mr Hewitt has been ill for some months and his doctors have advised him to retire. He is a keen gardener and all his friends will hope that for many years he will be able to devote more time and energy to this occupation than has hitherto been possible in view of his many business commitments.

£1,570,000 on furniture

In the past five years, the London County Council has spent about one and a half million pounds on furnishing new schools and replacing and improving furniture in existing schools: £300,000 more is to be spent during the next three years. What a tremendous opportunity this is, and what an educational influence on the consumers of the future. The LCC probably has to spend most, but all local authorities have commitments as regards school furniture — both for their new schools, to allow for the increase in birth-rate since the war, and in old schools as replacements. The best school furniture available in England at the present time is equal to any being produced overseas, and many examples are included in CoID's 'Design Review'. In addition to furniture produced commercially, some education authorities have designed special pieces to meet individual needs, ranging from mobile stages to filmstrip storage units, and others have adapted existing designs. There is therefore a wide choice available and the opportunity to give children the best school environment. The architecture of new schools has often been stressed as one of the factors in influencing the customer of the future. From a realistic standpoint, however, the majority of children in Great Britain still go to school in old buildings which, however ugly they may appear to us, were built to last. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that the things which go into these schools — dining tables and fabrics, light fittings and clocks, library shelves and work benches, desks and chairs — should all be well designed and chosen to suit the needs of the children. It is equally important, from the point of view of visual pleasure and the well-being of the children, that the repainting of the old schools should be carried out in accordance with contemporary ideas. Children react strongly to their environment, and the discriminating consumer of the future may well be the consequence of enlightened buying by the supplies officers of today.

S.R.F.

Business acquired

Hiscock, Appleby & Co Ltd has acquired the complete business of Else Lennan which manufactures accessories designed by Dennis Lennan for the modern home. The business will be carried on and expanded at the new welding works at Alperton. The lighting factory remains at Knightsbridge, and the sales of both divisions will be handled at the showroom and offices in Cadogan Place, Sloane Street, London SW1

SOUTH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CONSTITUENCY
PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION
THURSDAY, 28th MAY, 1955 (7 a.m.—6 p.m.)

RONALD BELL
The
Conservative
Candidate
presents his
ELECTION
ADDRESS

**VOTE FOR
BELL**



Politicians' pamphlets

Are election manifestoes designed to be read or to be thrown away? A typographer who looks at these typical examples may be in doubt, for the poor layout is emphasised by the use of too many founts, and the voter can hardly be inspired with a sense of sober confidence in the candidates' planning ability, however great this ability may be. R. M. Bell, Conservative, was elected with a majority of 17,981 over his nearest rival, W. E. Robinson, Labour.

'Groupe Espace'

The 'Groupe Espace', founded in Paris in 1951, has a membership consisting of modern architects, non-figurative painters and sculptors. Its activities include exhibitions, discussions and films. 'Groupes' have been formed in Switzerland, Italy and Sweden, and last February a 'groupe' was set up in England by Madame Paule Vézelay. Particulars may be obtained from Madame Paule Vézelay, Studio Flat, 60 Redcliffe Square, London SW10, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed.

Glass research

The British Glass Industry Research Association, formed under the auspices, and with the encouragement, of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, was recently registered as a company, limited by guarantee. But, unlike other newly formed research associations, it does not have to inaugurate its research; it will take over from the Department of Glass Technology of the University of Sheffield and will thus continue the tradition of research work begun there during the first world war. This research, in conjunction with the teaching and training of students of glass technology, was administered by the Glass Delegacy of the University of Sheffield.


Elections

Frank A. Mercer, who is the editor of 'The Studio', has been elected an Hon Fellow of the S I A for his services to design over many years. Gerard Hoffnung, the illustrator, has been elected a Fellow.

Plastics film

A film entitled 'To shape tomorrow' was recently shown at the National Film Theatre on the South Bank, London SE1. The film, designed to show the extent to which the public relies on plastics for things in daily use, was sponsored by Bakelite Ltd.

These show also to your window
GENERAL ELECTION — 1955
SOUTH DUCKS DIVISION
Polling Day—May 26th—7 a.m.—9 p.m.



**VOTE LIBERAL
for
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Printed by Messrs. A. Brunner & Co. Ltd., 100, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4

LETTERS

'Furniture survey'



SIR: I had hoped DESIGN would not become a parochial Mayfair parish magazine, but I fear it is. In DESIGN June page 34 you illustrated four beds and a divan in part of a survey on modern furniture. Survey indeed! Why, the four beds selected resemble no modern furniture; are hopelessly archaic and quite impracticable except perhaps in some designer's Mayfair mews! Imagine that basket horror in a northern town; think of the thick, immovable dusty grime settling on it — and the exasperated housewife who has to clean it. The bunk — what cave is that for, or atomic shelter? Surely we are trying

to forget these things of temporary, wartime expediency. In any case I can just see two boys pillow fighting on the top shelf. Wham! Broken collar bone or worse! As for the jack-knife or extender and the V-shaped upright Victorianism – well, you try dusting it – and watch yourself in the gloaming – on all those sharp corners. What is wrong with the bed illustrated with this letter? The legs are shapely, not matchsticks (look at your divan, also illustrated on page 34); the panels are easily dusted, no sharp edges. Compare the beds in your survey – all those uprights and sharp edges. As for the post on the headboard of the divan – something to stick the bills on? Whilst the London manufacturers who have made these are well known reputable makers, I wonder just how many of these 'stunt designs' you have picked out for eulogy are really happy in the home and are selling well, even to the more discerning public? Why one of these makers' own well designed, modern conventional beds, which the public buys cannot be illustrated is beyond me. These decadent dust traps make the furniture trade look so old fashioned and incapable of modern outlook, and DESIGN ought really to be up to date.

D. R. SIDDALL
Siddall & Hilton Ltd
Centre Mills
Sowerby Bridge, Yorks

'Books for schools'

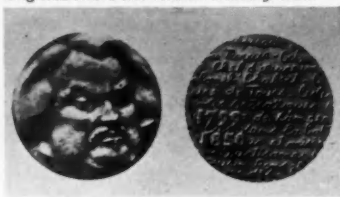
SIR: May I use your columns to reply to the observations of Mr Thomas R. Bennett, in DESIGN April page 47, concerning craft books, teacher-training methods, and the low standard of design in our schools? I am not the author of any books on design so I hold no brief for a defensive case, but Mr Bennett does not quite understand the problems involved. The object of school woodwork is to teach boys to reason and plan, to develop their manual ability, and to foster an appreciation of good design. In designing for industry graceful things must be created within the limits of existing machinery and a set price. This is difficult enough, but in designing for educational needs the work must include as many graded tool exercises as possible using a minimum amount of material. The design must be within the limited ability of the boy or he will lack enthusiasm. The appreciation of good design must be taught mainly by discussion and environment. The CoId has done a lot to assist teachers with this latter task. Mr Bennett criticises some books and teachers for their designs having simple lines, lack of applied ornament and waxed finish. It is not the job of the secondary schools to lead in the field of industrial design; their job is to educate. The only alternatives to Mr Bennett's criticism are reproductions. Most teachers do not profess to be designers, and indeed it would be impossible to give them the long training necessary. I do not think that the charge that the course is 'mixed' can be laid against the authorities concerned. The examination usually comprises mathematics, science, English, methods of teaching and psychology papers; a practical test, drawing, elementary design and a theory paper. The emphasis is on the latter practical sections.

What is really required is for men of Mr Bennett's enthusiasm to become practical teachers (the secondary modern school is the best place to learn) and to help raise the standard still further. That the standard has been raised there is no doubt. Great progress has been made since the time of Barter 50 years ago.

JOHN GREGORY
Southcott
1 Chelmsley Lane
Marston Green
Warwickshire

European medals

The exhibition of European medals from 1930-1955 recently held at the R S A contained examples of such beauty and originality from abroad that the British exhibits seemed weak by contrast. The medals reproduced here come from France and Holland, and illustrate the two methods of production, medals being 'cast' from a mould or 'struck' under pressure from dies. In general, casting produces higher quality today, and the medals of 'Toulouse-Lautrec' by André Galtié, France, right, and of 'The Dykes Closed' by I. J. Pieters, Holland, below right, are fine representatives of this process. 'Balzac' by Guy Revol of France shows what can be achieved with a 'struck' medal, and could set an example in England where this method is widely used.



'Pottery and glass'

SIR: I read with much interest the article on pottery and glass by Lucien Myers in DESIGN February pages 9-17. I also noted that Mr Myers' views are not necessarily your own. In this country we are experiencing a similar state of affairs as in Britain with a passive public, and goods distributors push those lines which they want to sell because they give the best margin of profit. Recently we enjoyed a spark of hope when some progressive department stores in special exhibitions started to show products of good and modern design from Britain and other progressive European countries like Sweden, Italy and so on. These new and well designed goods sell and may even force the carts of some local manufacturers out of their grooves. On many occasions did I notice in the past your constructive comments on features which, in your opinion, were wrong from the modern designer's point of view, and I am, therefore, surprised that you have passed without comment the picture of a china and glass department in a thirteenth century stone vaulting. If we assume that nothing could be done to prevent such a crime against the holiness of Gothic architecture and a china and glass show had to be installed there, then the designer should have made an attempt to blend twentieth century fittings with the Gothic vaults. I can visualise shelving which is not box-like rectangular but follows the contour of the Gothic arches, with longer shelves at the bottom and shorter ones higher up. A worse feature still is the use of those fluorescent light fittings on the centre line of the vault, ruining the architecture completely. It would have been better to conceal fluorescent lighting along the edges of the shelves, thus illuminating the vault indirectly in addition to the more essential shelf lighting. Modern lighting technique can easily solve this problem. The only points where light fittings could be installed are at the cross points of arches, but I feel that even such lighting was no more needed. Let the traders in the Temple be at least restricted.

P. J. GRUNDFEST
129 Victoria Road
Bellevue Hill, Sydney
New South Wales
Australia

BOOKS

Exhibition Stands, Robert Gutmann and Alexander Koch, Alexander Koch GmbH, 765 – obtainable from Alec Tiranti Ltd, London

The published lists of major international exhibitions, to be held this year, cover almost every part of the world; and their number is beginning to assume titanic proportions, without any account being taken of the hundreds of lesser exhibitions and shows, both public and private, which remain unheard of outside the particular town or district. This suggests that exhibitions, if not actually a 'major industry', are at least a very considerable activity in the world at large, a fact which makes it the more surprising that, of all activities concerning designers, this particular one is so poorly served by books and publications. So it is a great pleasure to welcome a book devoted entirely to the subject of exhibitions, and most admirably presented. It is primarily, and rightly, a picture book; and, beyond the introductory pages, the text is virtually restricted to brief comments and explanations attached to each of the 280 illustrations, which are drawn from all over the world. No doubt there are distinguished works which have not been included, and equally there are perhaps a few which should have been omitted; but nothing material to the intention of the book appears to have been lost thereby, except in the section devoted to travelling exhibitions, where neither the range nor the quality of the work shown seem to match the rest. There is an almost total absence of the portable exhibit – the kind that is folded or closed up – put straight on a lorry, without dismantling or crating. It is an important omission because it is a type of exhibit attuned to the growing costs of packing, handling and transport. Apart from this the only other discordant note is struck by the introductory comments of various famous designers. It is so much to ask a man to write a brief summary of the national trends in his own country without falling into the trap of vague generalities or banal observations: these are

pages make dreary reading, not much assisted by small 'sans serif' type.

For the rest, the book is a most stimulating pictorial record of some of the influences that have contributed to the development of exhibition presentation in recent years, and it is interesting to see how each country has developed its own particular design characteristics within a wider general idiom. It would be a most encouraging prospect if the authors of this admirable book could be persuaded to repeat their performance at intervals of three or four years; the consequent set of volumes would present a valuable and lively record of the progress of exhibition design throughout the world.

JOSEPH REVILL

Human Engineering Guide for Equipment Designers, Wesley E. Woodson, Cambridge University Press for University of California Press, 26s

Human engineering is the American name for ergonomics, the study of man-machine relationships. This book is a summary of existing ergonomic data and a guide to its application in design. Most of the information is taken from reports of experimental work done for the American forces and is not easily obtainable in this country. The book begins with an excellent analysis of the process of design and a suggested procedure for designing equipment to suit human requirements. This section is perhaps the most valuable in the book because it describes the systematic and painstaking way in which ergonomic findings must be applied if they are to be of value in design. A long chapter on the design of equipment and workspaces includes brief recommendations concerning visual indicators, aural equipment, controls, furniture, colour, acoustics, temperature, lighting, ventilation, body motion and fatigue. Few of these are sufficiently detailed to provide all the information that a designer would require in any particular instance but the information given is of value and cannot otherwise be obtained without a great deal of research.

In the remaining chapters Mr Woodson summarises existing physical and mental knowledge of the two main senses, vision and hearing, and such minor sensory factors as skin sensitivity, taste, smell, hunger, reflex action, reaction time, and sensitivity to motion. There is a section on body measurements that includes detailed head and body dimensions for groups of American servicemen and an interesting table relating height and chest circumference to 23 other dimensions. All this is concisely set out with many good diagrams and tables and should be useful to those who seek an introduction to the subject. British readers may be put off by the slick American cartoons that provide an overdose of human interest at the beginning of chapters and sub-sections. This is a pity, because it is a serious book and a fairly reliable source of much-needed information. Perhaps it is inevitable that a handbook intended for quick and easy reference should be a little too dogmatic. Readers should be warned that while Mr Woodson gives excellent advice on methods of tackling human design problems, his information is not as complete or as accurate as it may appear. There is, for instance, no mention of Dr Ackerblom's work on sitting, who suggests that the chairs we normally use are about two inches too high. Mr Woodson seems not to have heard of the Ackerblom chair and refers only to the traditional chair height of 18 inches. In many sections, such as the one on interior colour schemes, the recommendations are too few and take little account of aesthetics. Nevertheless it would be better that designers of equipment and buildings should consult this book than that the prevailing disregard of human factors should continue.

J. CHRISTOPHER JONES

Forest Products Research Bulletins, Numbers 29 and 33

The Strength Properties of Plywood, Parts 1 and 2, H M Stationery Office, 1s 3d and 2s respectively

The past few years have seen an enormous advance in the establishment of plywood in its own right, made possible very largely by the efficiency of modern adhesives. Plywood and other wood laminates are now used for many more purposes than would have seemed practicable not so very long ago. Not only are they used for parts of furniture, interior decoration and other familiar productions, but they are now recognised as structural materials for such diverse operations as the production of aeroplanes and the erection of buildings, in both of which capacities they are taking an increasingly important part as basic elements of construction. It is, perhaps, in these circumstances that the patient and meticulously accurate work of the Forest Products Research Laboratories will be found of the greatest value, but undoubtedly the fact that one can now know to within very narrow limits the exact behaviour of a material under various conditions will commend itself to an increasing number of users. Number 29 "describes the first part of a general investigation into the strength properties of plywood. Part 2 covers investigations on the effect of the shape and thickness of the veneers used in the construction of plywood upon its strength."

In Part 1 the method of testing for static bend, tension, compression, panel shear and panel impact are described and illustrated, results being given in tabular and graphic form for each kind of test made on examples of three-plywood fabricated from 25 different timbers. Part 2, on the 'Effects of the Geometry of Construction', gives in detail the working out of equations for the strength of plywood under each of the above-mentioned tests, tabulates the equations and demonstrates their application in various circumstances. Other tables give the modulus of elasticity, modulus of rupture, tensile strength and panel shear strength for plywoods composed of 27 different kinds of timber. This part is also illustrated.

PERCY YABLEY

Esempi di arredamento moderno di tutto il mondo, Tavoli, Tavolini, Carrelli, seconda serie, Roberto Aloi, Ulrico Hoepli, Milan, L.3000 - obtainable from Alec Tiranti Ltd, London

Tables, of every shape, kind and nationality, are illustrated in this book. There are two or three hundred of them, reflecting in the main a highly sophisticated modern taste - smart, clever, expensive, self-conscious, tricky, exhibitionist: having elegance without grace and wit without gaiety: devoid of warmth and of almost everything human or spontaneous. This is the cumulative effect; of furniture for exquisitely formed insects. Of course there are exceptions, and they are honourable. Some have dignity, a few have charm, and many even of those which have neither appear to have been competently made: but there are hardly any which combine quality, grace and real gaiety as so many small tables did in the great age of English cabinet making. The several historical examples illustrated in this book are (with exceptions) a fairly turgid lot; but if they do less than justice to our forefathers they do at least show how the ancients had a very human, spontaneous, and heart-warming ability to take a risk, even if this caused mistakes. The worst we ever seem to manage is naked ugliness, and not much of that. Half the trouble with much modern design is that no one dares make a mistake. It is deplorably accomplished, and too carefully studied. It comes from the head, not the heart. DAVID W. PYE

Handcraft in Metal, by A. J. Shirley and A. F. Shirley, B. T. Batsford Ltd, 21s

This book has been compiled with not only a thorough understanding of the craft, but also with a wide experience of the technique of teaching it. It should therefore be of great interest to all teachers and craftsmen, and will find a place amongst their permanent reference books. A. G. Scrivens, Principal of the Shoreditch Training College, aptly describes the authors and their book in his foreword when he says, "They give the impression in each of their chapters that a mere standard of craftsmanship, and a mere standard of craft teaching are not enough". The book is lavishly illustrated with diagrams of both tools and exercises, and with well chosen photographs of work by early craftsmen through to those of the present day. I would like to see, as a complement to this book, the diagrams by Dennis W. Caston, reproduced to half Imperial size and sold in a folder which all teachers of handcraft would find exceptionally useful, and which would effect a considerable saving of time in illustrating talks and lectures to students. N. R. G. POYNTON

Acknowledgment

The photograph on page 10 of the July issue of DESIGN was reproduced by permission of British European Airways.

Corrections

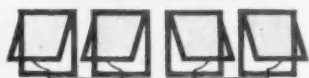
The design on coupe-shaped earthenware by Johnson, Matthey and Co Ltd, page 24 of the June issue of DESIGN was by Colin Haxby and not by Kenneth Clark.

The 'Golden Compass' shown on page 38 was designed by Marco Zanuso and Alberto Rosselli. The chairs designed by Gerli and made by Forma illustrated on the following page were not included in the competition.

Designers in this issue

Peter Hatch, MSIA (Art Editor).
F. H. Henrion, MBE, FSIA (cover).
Alvar Aalto (15). Alfred Altherr (15). B. Amundin (10). M. Bannister, LSIA (39). Martin Bradley (17). Allan Brooks (22). Robert Cantor, MSIA (39). Helen Close, MSIA (22). Contessa Friedlind de Colbertoldo Dinze (29). Beryl Coles, LSIA (26). Mitzi Cunliffe (26). Lucienne Day, ARCA, FSIA (18). Robin Day, ARCA, FSIA (37). John Drummond (25). Geoffrey Dunn (38). Hilda Durkin, MSIA (17, 22). Sven Engström (13). F. Fisk (27). Lucio Fontana (30). André Galtie (42). Marcel Gascoine (12). Bengt Gate (10). William Gear (21, 31). Thomas Gray, MSIA (39). J. Gregory, LSIA (39). Frank Guille, DESRCA, MSIA (38). Maj Heikinheimo (15). Ian Henderson Studio (37). Gunter Hennig (13). D. Heritage, DESRCA (37). Robert Heritage, DESRCA, MSIA (36, 37). Finn Juhl (14). Yoji Kasajima (14). Walter Krauer (25). Elspeth Kupperoth (30). James Lacey (27). Anthony Levitt-Prinsep (29). Steg Lindgren (13). H. E. Long, MSIA (35). Bente Lorenz (25). Eric Lyons, FRIBA, MSIA (11). Meredew Design Group (36). Mary Middleton, LSIA (22). A. J. Milne, MSIA (36). Neil Morris, MSIA (38). Brigitte D'Ortschy (13). Jo Patrick (11). Michael Patrick, ARIBA (11). Gio Pavesi (30). I. J. Pieters (42). John Piper (26). Ernest Race, RDI, FSIA (39). Tibor Reich, ATI, FSIA (23). Guy Revell (42). William Robertson, BSC (22). Marcel Roux (12). Professor R. D. Russell, RDI, FSIA (37). Astrid Sampe, HONDI (30). Hans Schwipert (13). Peter Simpson, DA (25). Corinne Steinrisser (30). Hans Tisdall (24). Kathleen Veevers, DESRCA (24). Paule Vézelay, MSIA (27). Ward & Austin (37). Isabella Wick (21). N. Wilkinson, MSIA (39). A. H. Woodfull, MSIA (39). Piero Zuffi (30).

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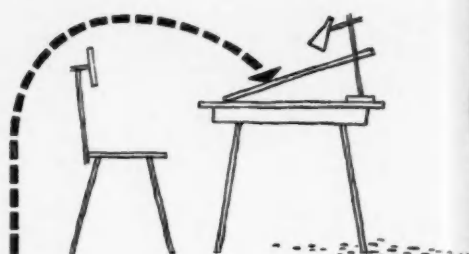
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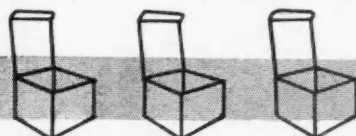
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